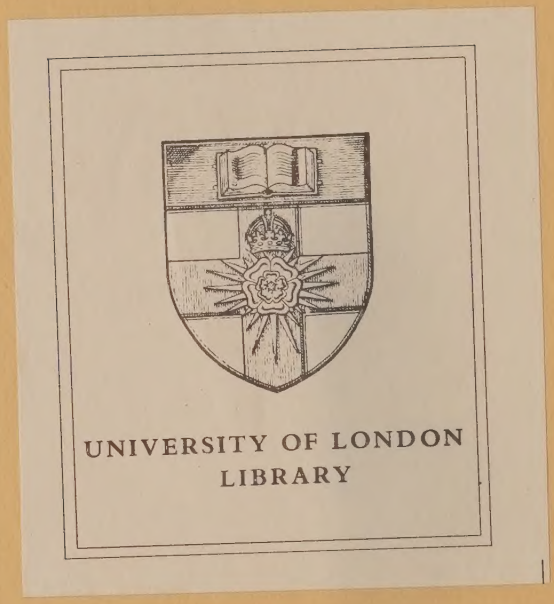
Parl. Papers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REPORTS

FROM

COMMITTEES:

SEVEN VOLUMES.

— (2.) —

DISTRESS FROM WANT OF EMPLOYMENT.

SESSION 1.—5 *February* 1895——6 *July* 1895.
SESSION 2.—12 *August* 1895——5 *September* 1895.

VOL. VIII.

1895.

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REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES:

1895.

SEVEN VOLUMES:—CONTENTS OF THE

SECOND VOLUME.

N.B.—*THE* Figures *at the* beginning of the line, *correspond with the* N° *at the foot of each* Report; *and the* Figures *at the* end of the line, *refer to the* MS. Paging *of the Volumes arranged for The House of Commons.*

DISTRESS FROM WANT OF EMPLOYMENT:

111. First Report from the Select Committee on Distress from Want of Employment; with the Proceedings of the Committee and Minutes of Evidence. p. 1

253. Second Report; with an Appendix. 215

FIRST REPORT

FROM THE

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

DISTRESS FROM WANT OF EMPLOYMENT;

TOGETHER WITH THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE,

AND

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed,*
11 *March* 1895.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE,
BY EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE,
PRINTERS TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

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90, West Nile Street, Glasgow; or
HODGES, FIGGIS, & Co., Limited, 104, Grafton Street, Dublin.

Distress from Want of Employment.

Ordered,—[*Wednesday, 13th February* 1895]:—That a Select Committee be appointed to consider and report as to—(*a*) The extent to which Distress, arising from Want of Employment, prevails; (*b*) The powers at present possessed by Local or Central Authorities in relation to such cases; (*c*) Any steps which may be taken, whether by changes in Legislation or Administration, to deal with the evils arising therefrom; and (*d*) To make an Interim Report to the House at the earliest possible date on what steps should be taken either by Parliament, the Departments of State, or Local Authorities, to meet the Distress this Winter.

Ordered,—[*Friday, 15th February* 1895]:—That the Select Committee do consist of Twenty-five Members.

Committee nominated of—

Mr. Acland.
Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. Billson.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. Boscawen.
Mr. Bousfield.
Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.
Mr. Crean.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Heneage.
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Mather.
Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. Round.
Mr. Whiteley.
Mr. John Wilson (*Durham*).
Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

That the Committee have power to send for Persons, Papers, and Records.

That Seven be the Quorum of the Committee.

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FIRST REPORT.

THE SELECT COMMITTEE appointed to consider and Report as to:—(*a*) The extent to which Distress, arising from want of Employment prevails; (*b*) The powers at present possessed by Local or Central Authorities in relation to such cases; (*c*) Any steps which may be taken, whether by changes in Legislation or Administration, to deal with the evils arising therefrom; and (*d*) To make an Interim Report to the House at the earliest possible Date on what steps should be taken either by Parliament, the Departments of State, or Local Authorities, to meet the Distress this Winter;—HAVE made progress in the matters to them referred, and have agreed to the following FIRST REPORT:—

1. YOUR Committee having regard to the fourth clause of their Reference, whereby they are instructed:—

> "(*d.*) To make an Interim Report to the House at the earliest possible date "on what steps should be taken, either by Parliament, the Departments of State, "or Local Authorities, to meet the Distress this Winter"—

have endeavoured to lose no time in obtaining the requisite information, for the purpose of submitting any recommendations that might appear to be of practical and immediate use.

2. Through the medium of the Local Government Board a Circular Letter was addressed to the Mayors of Towns and the Chairmen of District Councils requesting information on the following points:—

> "(1.) Whether there is any exceptional distress in the district, and how far this "is due to circumstances peculiar to the locality or to the severe weather?
>
> "(2.) What is being done to meet the distress by public authorities or by "voluntary agencies, and the average daily number relieved by each of the "agencies during the week ended Saturday, the 16th February?
>
> "(3.) Is an unemployed register maintained, and with what result?
>
> "(4.) Have you any suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving such "distress?"

3. Your Committee desire to acknowledge the great promptitude with which many replies to this inquiry have been received and communicated to them. An analysis of these replies will be appended to their Report; and the substance of the replies, so far as yet received, and so far as they concern the nature and extent of prevailing distress, may be summed up by saying that out of 1,194 replies from districts representing a total population of 20,901,210 persons; in 596 localities, representing a population of 6,797231 persons, there is no exceptional distress; that in 454 localities, with a population of 10,381,607 persons, there is exceptional distress, due solely to the severity of the winter; and, that in 144 localities, with a population of 3,722,372 persons, there is, apart from the want of employment due to the weather, an exceptional want of employment owing to slackness of trade, depression of agriculture, or to particular local or industrial causes.

4. The Local Government Board has also furnished to your Committee copies of very full reports on the whole subject which that Department had, on the day upon which this Committee was appointed, called for from the Poor Law Inspectors throughout the country. These reports confirm in a remarkable degree, from the point of view of Poor Law administration, the independent replies, already referred to, of the local municipal authorities.

5. Your Committee have also heard the evidence of several witnesses. They have examined Sir Hugh Owen (Secretary of the Local Government Board) partly on the general question referred to them (including that of the powers possessed by local bodies in relation to the acquisition of land for relief purposes), but more particularly on the immediate necessities of the present time.

6. In the course of their inquiry it was suggested that the Borough of West Ham was a fair type of the localities which suffer most. They therefore took evidence with regard to the state of affairs in West Ham (including the efforts that have been made to relieve distress, and the remedies which local experience has suggested) from Mr. Keir-Hardie, Member for the South Division of the Borough, from the Town Clerk, who is also Clerk to the Guardians; also from Mr. Percy Alden, a member of the Borough Council, and Mr. A. F. Hills, a resident employer of labour, two gentlemen who have been active in the philanthropic work of the district. Your Committee have also examined the Clerk of the Union of St. Olave's (Southwark), where a very unusual extent of outdoor relief has been given, especially in recent weeks; and Mr. Benn, Member for St. George's-in-the East, has explained to them a scheme applicable to the metropolis alone, whereby, in his opinion, the poorer parishes might be assisted in coping with the difficulty.

7. It is at this stage of their inquiry that it seems to the Committee to be their duty, by way of the Interim Report required of them, to state to the House the position in which they find themselves.

8. It is abundantly clear that while over a great part of the country no lack of employment has prevailed beyond that which might be expected as a consequence of an unusually severe winter, there is and has been during the present severe winter, much grave distress affecting workmen ordinarily in regular work, as well as those whose employment is always liable to be intermittent, and that much suffering has been caused by this distress in many parts of the country; and there are, without doubt, many places where, underlying the distress due to weather, there exists a want of employment of labour which will remain in force after milder weather has opened the outdoor trades. Your Committee, therefore, feel that it would have been most desirable had they been able, apart from the general inquiry which you entrusted to them, to make some recommendations applicable to the present juncture.

9. But any such recommendation must satisfy two conditions:—

(*a*) It must be immediately applicable during the remaining weeks of the winter season.

(*b*) It must be such that Parliament might be reasonably expected to accept it, or even take it into serious consideration without further inquiry into the facts upon which it is founded or the principle it embodies.

10. It is with regret that your Committee find that no plan has been suggested to them which fulfils these conditions.

11. The principal suggestions that have been made to your Committee are these:—

(1.) Mr. Keir-Hardie laid before the Committee a proposal for the immediate relief of want by the provision of relief works, or by the issue of food to the unemployed, or otherwise; local subscriptions, or rates furnishing one-half of the sum to be expended, the State supplying an equal contribution.

(2.) Mr. Benn would find a means of meeting a strain upon the poorer unions in the metropolis by making the relief of the deserving worker, when in distress from want of employment, a charge on the Common Poor Fund, to which all metropolitan unions, the more as well as the less wealthy, already contribute.

(3.) Mr. Hills submitted a carefully-prepared scheme, not only for charitable relief, but for relief by employment, which, like Mr. Hardie's plan, called into aid a subsidy from the State, as well as local contributions. He said, however, that his scheme would not provide any valuable assistance for the present season.

(4.) From several quarters the Committee have been told that the disqualification for the Parliamentary Franchise, which is entailed by the receipt of relief from the guardians of the poor, operates in excluding from help many men who are in want through no fault of their own, although this consequence does not follow

follow from relief given by other local authorities; and it was urged that this condition should not apply in the case of exceptional distress such as that of the present year.

(5.) Other suggestions have been made of labour colonies, reclamation of river-side lands, &c.

12. Your Committee do not intend to state these proposals in full; they do not desire to give any arguments for or against them; still less do they wish to express an opinion, at the present stage, upon them. It is evident that all such suggestions will require much careful consideration before they can be adopted.

13. The Committee, therefore, are of opinion that they best discharge their duty to the House by stating the nature and general purport of the evidence they have, up to this point, received; by explaining why no immediate recommendation can be made; and by proceeding with the further investigation of the great subject remitted to them.

11 *March* 1895.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE.

Monday, 18*th February* 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. John Burns.	Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.
Mr. Round.	Mr. Billson.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.	Mr. Bousfield.
Mr. Bartley.	Mr. Logan.
Mr. Whiteley.	Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. Renshaw.	Mr. Benn.
Mr. Mather.	Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.	Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).	Mr. Crean.
Mr. Acland.	

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN was called to the Chair.

The Committee deliberated.

Motion made, and Question,—"That a letter be addressed to the Local Government Board inviting that Department at once to issue a Circular to Local Authorities requesting information with the least possible delay on the points detailed below, the Local Authorities referred to being the Mayors of Towns and the Chairmen of District Councils,—

'1. Whether there is any exceptional distress in the district, and how far this is due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, or to the severe weather?

'2. What is being done to meet the distress by public authorities or by voluntary agencies, and the average daily number relieved by each of the agencies during the week ending Saturday, 16th February?

'3. Is an unemployed register maintained, and with what result?

'4. Have you any suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving such distress?'"

—(The *Chairman*)—put, and *agreed to*.

[Adjourned till To-morrow, at Twelve o'clock.

Tuesday, 19*th February* 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN in the Chair.

Mr. Wootton Isaacson.	Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.	Mr. Billson.
Mr. Round.	Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Bartley.	Mr. Logan.
Mr. Whiteley.	Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. Renshaw.	Mr. Benn.
Mr. Jackson.	Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.	Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Mather.	Mr. Crean.
Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).	Mr. Bousfield.
Mr. Acland.	

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. JACKSON took the Chair.

Sir *Hugh Owen*, K.C.B., was examined.

[Adjourned till To-morrow, at Twelve o'clock.

Wednesday, 20*th February* 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN in the Chair.

Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Billson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Crean.
Mr. John Wilson (*Durham*).
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Bousfield.
Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Whiteley.
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.
Mr. Mather.
Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).
Mr. Acland.
Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Round.
Mr. Bartley.

Sir *Hugh Owen*, K.C.B., was further examined.

[Adjourned till To-morrow, at Twelve o'clock.

Thursday, 21*st February* 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN in the Chair.

Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Billson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Crean.
Mr. John Wilson (*Durham*).
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Mather.
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.
Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).
Mr. Acland.

Sir *Hugh Owen*, K.C.B., was further examined.

[Adjourned till To-morrow, at Twelve o'clock.

Friday, 22*nd February* 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN in the Chair.

Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Billson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Bousfield.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. John Wilson (*Durham*).
Mr. Round.
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Mather.
Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).
Mr. Acland.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. Whiteley.
Mr. Crean.

Sir *Hugh Owen*, K.C.B., was further examined.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie*, a Member of the Committee, was examined.

[Adjourned till Monday next, at Twelve o'clock.

Monday, 25th February 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN in the Chair.

Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Billson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Bousfield.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. Crean.
Mr. Round.
Mr. John Wilson (*Durham*).
Mr. Whiteley.
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.
Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).
Mr. Acland.
Mr. Mather.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie*, a Member of the Committee, was further examined.

[Adjourned till To-morrow, at Twelve o'clock.

Tuesday, 26th February 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN in the Chair.

Mr. John Wilson (*Durham*).
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Whiteley.
Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Mather.
Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).
Mr. Acland.
Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Billson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

Mr. *Frederick E. Hilleary*, LL.D., was examined.

[Adjourned till To-morrow, at Two o'clock.

Wednesday, 27th February 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN in the Chair.

Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Billson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. John Wilson (*Durham*).
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. Whiteley.
Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. Mather.
Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.
Mr. Round.
Mr. Acland.
Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Jackson.

Mr. *Frederick E. Hilleary*, LL.D., was further examined.

Mr. *Percy Alden*, M.A., was examined.

[Adjourned till To-morrow, at Twelve o'clock.

Thursday, 28th February 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN in the Chair.

Mr. Wootton Isaacson.	Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. John Wilson (*Durham*).	Mr. Bousfield.
Mr. Bartley.	Mr. Logan.
Mr. Whiteley.	Mr. Benn.
Mr. Renshaw.	Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Mather.	Mr. Jackson.
Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).	Mr. Stuart-Wortley.
Mr. Acland.	Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Billson.	Mr. John Burns.

Mr. *Percy Alden*, M.A., was further examined.

Mr. *A. F. Hills*, M.A., was examined.

[Adjourned till To-morrow, at Twelve o'clock.

Friday, 1st March 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN in the Chair.

Mr. Keir-Hardie.	Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).
Mr. David Randell.	Mr. Mather.
Mr. Benn.	Mr. Stuart-Wortley.
Mr. Pickersgill.	Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. Logan.	Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Lawrence.	Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. Billson.	Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. John Burns.	Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Acland.	

Mr. *A. F. Hills*, M.A., was further examined.

Mr. *Edward Pitts Fenton* was examined.

[Adjourned till Monday next, at Twelve o'clock.

Monday, 4th March 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN in the Chair.

Mr. Round.	Mr. Bousfield.
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.	Mr. Logan.
Mr. Bartley.	Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. Renshaw.	Mr. Benn.
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.	Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).	Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Acland.	Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. John Burns.	Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Billson.	Mr. David Randell.

Mr. *John Williams Benn*, a Member of the Committee, was examined.

The Committee deliberated.

[Adjourned till Friday next, at Twelve o'clock.

Monday, 11*th March* 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN in the Chair.

Mr. Acland.	Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Bartley.	Mr. Logan.
Mr. Benn.	Mr. Mather.
Mr. Billson,	Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.	Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Bousfield.	Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. John Burns.	Mr. Round.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.	Mr. Whiteley.
Mr. Heneage.	Mr. John Wilson (*Durham*).
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.	Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).
Mr. Jackson.	Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

DRAFT REPORT, proposed by the *Chairman*, read the first time, as follows:—

"1. YOUR Committee, having regard to the fourth clause of their Reference, whereby they are instructed:—

"'(*d*) To make an Interim Report to the House at the earliest possible date on what steps should be taken, either by Parliament, the Departments of State, or Local Authorities, to meet the Distress this Winter'—

have endeavoured to lose no time in obtaining the requisite information, for the purpose of submitting any recommendations that might appear to be of practical and immediate use.

"2. Through the medium of the Local Government Board a Circular Letter was addressed to the Mayors of Towns and the Chairmen of District Councils requesting information on the following points:—

"'(1.) Whether there is any exceptional distress in the district, and how far this is due to circumstances peculiar to the locality or to the severe weather?

"'(2.) What is being done to meet the distress by public authorities or by voluntary agencies, and the average daily number relieved by each of the agencies during the week ended Saturday, the 16th February?

"'(3.) Is an unemployed register maintained, and with what result?

"'(4.) Have you any suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving such distress?'

"3. Your Committee desire to acknowledge the great promptitude with which replies to this inquiry have been received and communicated to them. An analysis of these replies is appended to this Report; and the substance of the reports thus received, so far as they concern the nature and extent of prevailing distress, may be summed up by saying that out out of 1,194 replies from districts representing a total population of 20,901,210 persons; in 596 localities, representing a population of 6,797,231 persons, there is no exceptional distress; that in 454 localities, with a population of 10,381,607 persons, there is exceptional distress, due solely to the severity of the winter; and that in 144 localities, with a population of 3,722,372 persons, there is, apart from the want of employment due to the weather, an exceptional want of employment owing to slackness of trade or to other local causes.

"4. The Local Government Board has also furnished to the Committee copies of very full reports on the whole subject which that Department had, on the day upon which this Committee was appointed, called for from the Poor Law Inspectors throughout the country. These reports confirm in a remarkable degree, from the point of view of Poor Law administration, the independent replies, already referred to, of the local municipal authorities.

"5. Your Committee have also heard the evidence of several witnesses. They have examined Sir Hugh Owen (Secretary of the Local Government Board) partly on the general question

question referred to them (including that of the powers possessed by local bodies in relation to the acquisition of land for relief purposes), but more particularly on the immediate necessities of the present time.

"6. In the course of their inquiry it became apparent that the Borough of West Ham, if it was not actually the most distressed locality in the country, was at least a fair type of the localities which suffer most. They therefore took evidence with regard to the state of affairs in West Ham (including the efforts that have been made to relieve distress, and the remedies which local experience has suggested) from Mr. Keir-Hardie, Member for the Division of the Borough, from the Town Clerk, who is also Clerk to the Guardians, from Mr. Percy Alden, a member of the Borough Council, and from Mr. A. F. Hills, a resident employer of labour, who has been active in the philanthropic work of the district. The Committee has also examined the Clerk of the Union of St. Olave's (Southwark), where a very unusual extent of outdoor relief has been given, especially in recent weeks; and Mr. Benn, M.P., has explained to them a scheme applicable to the metropolis alone, whereby the poorer parishes may be assisted in coping with the difficulty.

"7. It is at this stage of their inquiry that it seems to the Committee to be their duty, by way of the Interim Report required of them, to state to the House the position in which they find themselves.

"8. It is abundantly clear that while over a great part of the country no lack of employment has prevailed beyond that which might be expected as a consequence of an usually severe winter, there is and has been during the present severe winter, much grave distress affecting workmen ordinarily in regular work, as well as those whose employment is always liable to be intermittent, and that much suffering has been caused by this distress in many parts of the country; and there are, without doubt, many places where, underlying the distress due to weather, there exists a chronic want of employment of labour which will remain in force after milder weather has opened the outdoor trades. Your Committee, therefore, feel that it would have been most desirable had they been able, apart from the general inquiry which you entrusted to them, to make some recommendations applicable to the present juncture.

"9. But any such recommendation must satisfy two conditions:—

"(*a*) It must be immediately applicable during the remaining weeks of the winter season.

"(*b*) It must be such that Parliament might be reasonably expected to accept it, or even take it into serious consideration without further inquiry into the facts upon which it is founded or the principle it embodies.

"10. It is with regret that your Committee finds that no plan has been suggested to them which fulfils these conditions.

"11. The principal suggestions that have been made to your Committee are these:—

"(1.) Mr. Keir-Hardie laid before the Committee a proposal for the immediate relief of want by the issue of food to the unemployed, local subscriptions or rates furnishing one-half of the sum to be expended, the State supplying an equal contribution.

"(2.) Mr. Benn would find a means of meeting a stress upon the poorer unions in the metropolis by making the relief of the deserving worker, when in distress from want of employment, a charge on the Common Poor Fund, to which all metropolitan unions, the more as well as the less wealthy, already contribute.

"(3.) Mr. Hills submitted a carefully-prepared scheme, not only for charitable relief but for relief by employment, which, like Mr. Hardie's plan, called into aid a subsidy from the State, as well as local contributions. He said, however, that his scheme would not provide any valuable assistance for the present season.

"(4.) From several quarters the Committee have been told that the disqualification for the Parliamentary Franchise, which is entailed by the receipt of relief from the guardians of the poor operates in excluding from help many worthy and independent men, who are in want through no fault of their own, although this consequence does not follow from relief given by other local authorities; and it was urged that this condition should not apply in the case of exceptional distress as that of the present year.

"(5.) Other suggestions have been made of labour colonies, reclamation of riverside lands, &c.

"12. Your Committee do not pretend to state these proposals in full: they do not desire to give any arguments for or against them; still less do they wish to express an opinion, at the present stage, upon them. But it is evident that all such suggestions require much careful consideration before they can be adopted.

"13. The Committee, therefore, are of opinion that they had best discharge their duty to the House by stating the nature and general purport of the evidence they have, up to this point, received; by explaining why no immediate recommendation can be made; and by proceeding with the further investigation of the great subject remitted to them."

DRAFT REPORT read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1-2, *agreed to.*

Paragraph 3, amended, and *agreed to.*

Paragraphs 4—5, *agreed to.*

Paragraph 6, amended, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, That the following new paragraph be inserted in the Report:—

"Your Committee considered that they would defeat the intention of the Reference to them, so far as regards reporting what steps should be taken to meet the distress this winter, if the taking of evidence were prolonged so as to delay their Interim Report further. Upon the information to which reference is made above, your Committee have arrived at the conclusion that there are certain districts in which distress prevails, of such a character and extent as to call for the prompt attention of Parliament. In order to meet such cases, and at the same time to provide for the periodical ascertainment of the numbers of the unemployed throughout the country, your Committee recommends that a Bill should be at once introduced, providing—

"(*a*) That every local authority should forthwith establish a register of the unemployed and report monthly to the Local Government Board the numbers registered.

"(*b*) That if in the opinion of any local authority there exists in its district exceptional distress with which the existing Poor Law and sanitary authorities and local voluntary agencies are unable adequately to deal, the local authority may, on or before the 31st day of March 1895, pass a resolution to that effect, and may open a subscription list and invite voluntary contributions to an emergency fund. Thereupon, so soon as not less than 100*l.* be so subscribed, the local authority may contribute to the Emergency Fund out of the District Rates an amount equal to that so subscribed, but not exceeding in the whole the amount of a rate of a halfpenny in the £., and the local authority may apply to the Local Government Board for a contribution to the Emergency Fund of a like amount out of money to be provided by Parliament."

"(*c*) That the fund be appropriated primarily to relief works for some purpose of public utility, and that the rate of wages to be paid upon such relief works do not exceed two-thirds the rate of wages ordinarily paid for similar work in the district, and that only those should be employed who had been resident in the district six months.

"(*d*) That in cases which are not met by relief works the local authorities be authorised to give relief by way of loans, not in money but in kind, by credit notes given for the supply of goods at specified establshments.

"(*e*) That every local authority receiving any grant should report in full to the Local Government Board upon the steps taken by them to meet the distress, and the results thereof.

"Your Committee anticipate that if Parliament voted a sum of 50,000*l.* for this purpose it would probably be amply sufficient to meet the calls which would be made upon it, as it could not be required unless 50,000*l.* was first raised by voluntary subscriptions. These sums, together with 50,000*l.* out of the rates, would give a sum of 150,000*l.* available to meet present distress.

"Your Committee considers that there would be no need for any local Government inquiry into the applications made, except to verify the amount of the local subscriptions, as the requirement of the consent of the local authority and a voluntary public subscription as a condition precedent, would secure that no application would be made for the Parliamentary grant unless the distress were such as to arouse a strong local feeling to the extent required to raise a corresponding local voluntary subscription.

"Your Committee desire to guard themselves against the presumption that the course of action which they above recommend should furnish a precedent for meeting similar emergencies at a future time, and your Committee will proceed to hear further evidence and consider more fully the subject referred to them.

"The proposals of your Committee are to be considered as in the nature of a temporary expedient of an experimental character, but your Committee believe that valuable experience available for future guidance would result from the experiments"—(Mr. *Bousfield*).—Question put, That this paragraph be inserted in the Report.—The Committee divided:

Ayes, 4.

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 17.
Mr. Bousfield.	Mr. Acland.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.	Mr. Bartley.
Mr. David Randell.	Mr. Benn.
Mr. Whiteley.	Mr. Billson.
	Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
	Mr. John Burns.
	Mr. Heneage.
	Mr. Jackson.
	Mr. Lawrence.
	Mr. Logan.
	Mr. Mather.
	Mr. Pickersgill.
	Mr. Renshaw.
	Mr. Round.
	Mr. John Wilson (*Durham*).
	Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).
	Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

Another Amendment proposed, That the following new paragraph be inserted in the Report:—

"On its being represented to the Committee that great destitution prevailed in several districts in North and South Wales, it was decided, before this stage of their inquiry, to take evidence (so far as Wales and Monmouthshire were affected) first from Pontypool, Swansea, and other localities, in which the tinplate industry is carried on, and in which, owing largely to the crippled condition of that particular trade, one-third of the operatives have during the last two or three years been unemployed, and the remainder intermittently so; but such evidence has not yet been taken and has been indefinitely postponed. The workers have remained in their respective districts, accepting from time to time the very scanty amount of work which the uncertain state of the trade afforded, and in the hope of a return to regular employment. During this long period of partial stoppage and consequent precarious livelihood a large percentage of the men and their families, together with others engaged in industries partly dependent upon the tinplate trade, have gradually been reduced to the pitiful condition in which they are now to be found, and they are most reluctantly compelled to appeal for assistance to help them to tide over their present great distress. The Pontypool Urban District Council, under date 28th February 1895, report to the Local Government Board a deplorable condition of affairs; that very great distress prevails; that the general trade in the district is in a state of utter collapse; that the Council is unable to give any except intermittent employment as a means of relief; that the funds available locally for relieving the distress will soon be exhausted, and they strongly urge the Government to make grants in aid to local authorities"—(Mr. *Randell*).—Question put, That this paragraph be inserted in the Report.—The Committee divided:

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 14.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.	Mr. Acland.
Mr. Logan.	Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Pickersgill.	Mr. Billson.
Mr. David Randell.	Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. Whiteley.	Mr. John Burns.
	Mr. Heneage.
	Mr. Jackson.
	Mr. Lawrence.
	Mr. Mather.
	Mr. Renshaw.
	Mr. Round.
	Mr. John Wilson (*Durham*).
	Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).
	Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

Another Amendment proposed, That the following new paragraph be inserted in the Report:—

"Your Committee is of opinion that the following change in the law is desirable, and that a Bill should be forthwith introduced by Her Majesty's Government and passed through its various stages to give effect to it.

"(1) A state of 'exceptional distress' to be recognised by law.

"(2) To be in the power of a Poor Law Authority to notify the Local Government Board that a state of 'exceptional distress' exists in any union or locality.

"(3) Upon such notification being sent, the Poor Law Authority to be empowered to distribute relief in any form whatsoever, and subject to no restriction or test.

"(4) Disfranchisement not to follow acceptance of relief during 'exceptional distress.'

"(5) The period of 'exceptional distress' to be terminated by similar notification, but not to continue for longer duration than three months without the consent of the Local Government Board, after local inquiry, if considered necessary, by the Board"—(Mr. *Whiteley*).—Question proposed, That the proposed new paragraph be inserted in the Report.—Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Another Amendment proposed, That the following new paragraph be inserted in the Report:—

"It seems to your Committee that the Metropolis constitutes a special case in which an admitted principle might readily be extended so as to give relief to the poorest districts. This principle is embodied in the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, originally established by the Metropolitan Poor Act, 1867, and in the Equalisation of Rates Act of last year, measures under which contributions are made in aid of the poorer districts out of central funds fed by rates levied evenly on rateable value over the whole Metropolis. Notwithstanding the relief afforded by these Acts, however, the poorer parishes of the Metropolis still sustain a much heavier burden than the richer parishes, *e.g.*, evidence has been given before your Committee that the rates in Bow are even now 7*s.* 5*d.* in the £., whereas in St. James's, Westminster, they are only 4*s.* 5½*d.* in the £. Moreover, it is precisely in those districts which are most heavily rated that the pressure arising from want of employment is most acutely felt. Your Committee cannot but recognise that, although the unemployed are mainly congregated in particular districts, they are really the unemployed of the Metropolis as a whole, to which they constitute a matter of 'common concern.' Hence, in the opinion of your Committee, the conditions are established which justify contributions from a common metropolitan fund. Apart from such relief, it is practically impossible in these districts to give effect to the recommendation contained in the circular of the Local Government Board, that Boards of Guardians should co-operate with local authorities, in order to 'avoid the pauperisation of those persons whose difficulties are occasioned only by exceptional circumstances, arising from temporary scarcity of employment, and who are unwilling to become dependent on Poor Law relief.'"

"With a view to facilitate and encourage such co-operation, your Committee suggest that, when the Local Government Board is satisfied that distress arising from want of employment extensively prevails in any metropolitan union, the guardians of such union may agree with any sanitary authority within their union that, in consideration of the latter employing persons of the class above described in specified relief works during such period as may be agreed upon, with the sanction of the Local Government Board, the guardians will make a contribution (chargeable on the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund) to the sanitary authority of an amount not exceeding one-half of the wages paid to such persons, together with the whole cost of supervising them, and the whole cost of necessary inquiries as to the *bona fides* of applicants for such employment. Your Committee have received evidence that the cost of supervision and inquiry in connection with relief works is very heavy, and they think that the whole of this cost should be defrayed out of the Common Fund. On the other hand, they propose to charge on the Common Fund only one-half of the wages paid to the unemployed, as it has been suggested that the product of the relief work would confer some special benefit on the locality concerned.

"It has been objected that, granted the advisability of making contributions out of a central metropolitan fund, the machinery of the Equalisation of Rates Act, 1894, is more applicable to the case than the machinery of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund. It may be pointed out, however, that the Equalisation of Rates Act was founded on the recognition of permanent conditions, and that the distribution of the fund was based on population; whereas the present proposal is designed to meet exceptional periods of distress, and amounts actually expended on specified services will alone be charged on the Common Fund. Moreover, the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund is administered by the Local Government Board, whilst the Equalisation Fund is administered by the London County Council. As, therefore, under the proposals of your Committee, control is given to the Local Government Board, it seems obviously appropriate that these expenses should be charged on the first-named fund. Your Committee may add that the expenditure now charged on this fund includes items which are not immediately connected with pauper relief, and that, since the establishment of the fund in 1867, fresh items have from time to time been charged upon it by the Legislature as new necessities arose.

"Statutory authority will, of course, be necessary in order to charge these expenses on the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund; but Parliamentary action is expressly within the scope of the Interim Report of your Committee, and they submit this proposal as applicable to the object of that Report. They further suggest that the necessary powers should be enacted for twelve months, so as to cover the period which may elapse before any recommendations which your Committee may make in their main Report come into operation"—(Mr. *Pickersgill*).—Question proposed, That the proposed new paragraph be inserted in the Report.—Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Another Amendment proposed, That the following new paragraph be inserted in the Report:—"Your Committee recommend—That the cost of pauper lunatics be no longer borne by the unions of the East End of London. That an Emergency Committee be formed to employ the moneys so raised in giving work to the genuine unemployed who are absolutely destitute, and relieving them with

with the necessaries of life to enable them to resume work. That the cost of pauper lunatics be borne by the Imperial Exchequer"—(Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*).—Question proposed, That the proposed new paragraph be inserted in the Report.—Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Paragraph 7, Amendment proposed, at end of the paragraph, to add the following words: "But the Committee, in the absence of evidence as to distress from want of employment in the provinces, are not so well qualified as they would otherwise be to make such preliminary statement"—(Mr. *Randell*).—Question proposed, That those words be there added.—Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Paragraph 7, *agreed to.*

Paragraph 8, amended.

Amendment proposed, in line 8, after the word "trades," to insert the following words: "Your Committee recommend that a Bill should forthwith be introduced by Her Majesty's Government and passed through its various stages, for enacting that no person who has ordinarily maintained him or herself and family shall suffer electoral disability or loss of any Parliamentary or other franchise by reason of having received temporary out-door relief from any board of guardians. Your Committee are of opinion that the speedy passing of such a measure will tend in some degree to meet the distress by enabling many of the deserving poor to accept relief which, at the present time, they either decline to apply for or refuse"—(Mr. *Logan*).—Question put, That those words be there inserted.—The Committee divided:

Ayes, 10.	Noes, 10.
Mr. Benn.	Mr. Acland.
Mr. Billson.	Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.	Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. Logan.	Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Mather.	Mr. Heneage.
Mr. Pickersgill.	Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. David Randell.	Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Whiteley.	Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. John Wilson (*Durham*).	Mr. Round.
Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).	Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

Whereupon the *Chairman* declared himself with the *Noes.*

Paragraph 8, as amended, *agreed to.*

Paragraphs 9--10, *agreed to.*

Paragraph 11, amended.

Another Amendment proposed, at end of Sub-section (4), to add the following words: "Your Committee consider that this matter is well worthy the attention of Parliament, which alone can deal with it"—(Mr. *Mather*).—Question proposed, That those words be there added.—Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Another Amendment proposed, to leave out Sub-section (4)—(Mr. *Bartley*).—Question put, That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the paragraph.—The Committee divided:

Ayes, 15.	Noes, 3.
Mr. Benn.	Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Billson.	Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. John Burns.	Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.	
Mr. Heneage.	
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.	
Mr. Logan.	
Mr. Mather.	
Mr. Pickersgill.	
Mr. David Randell.	
Mr. Renshaw.	
Mr. Round.	
Mr. John Wilson (*Durham*).	
Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).	
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.	

Paragraph, as amended, *agreed to.*

Paragraph 12, amended, and *agreed to.*

Paragraph 13, amended.

Another Amendment proposed, in line 3, after the word "received" to leave out from the words "by explaining" to the end of the paragraph, and insert the words "that the scheme applicable to the metropolis alone, as foreshadowed by Mr. Benn, that the unemployed should be put on waste or derelict lands in the near neighbourhood of London your Committee are of opinion should be carried out, and the means required for doing so be provided, through the Guardians, from the Common Poor Fund and the Local Authorities"—(Mr. *John Wilson* (Govan).)—Question proposed, That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the paragraph.—Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Paragraph, as amended, *agreed to.*

Question put, That this Report, as amended, be the First Report of the Committee to the House.—The Committee divided:

Ayes, 11.	Noes, 6.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.	Mr. Bartley.
Mr. John Burns.	Mr. Benn.
Mr. Heneage.	Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.	Mr. Logan.
Mr. Jackson.	Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. Mather.	Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Renshaw.	
Mr. Round.	
Mr. John Wilson (*Durham*).	
Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).	
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.	

Ordered, To Report.

[Adjourned till Friday next, at Twelve o'clock.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

Tuesday, 19*th February* 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Acland.
Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. Billson
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. Bousfield.
Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.
Mr. Crean.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Mather.
Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. Round.
Mr. Whiteley.
Mr. John Wilson (Govan).
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, IN THE CHAIR.

Sir HUGH OWEN, K.C.B., called in; and Examined.

THE *Chairman* read the following circular letter from the Local Government Board:—

"*Urgent.*

"*Circular.*

"Distress from Want of Employment.

"Local Government Board,
"Whitehall, S.W.
"19 February 1895.

"SIR,—I am directed by the Local Government Board to state that they have received a communication from the Chairman of the Select Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, in which the Board are requested to issue a circular to the mayors of towns and the chairmen of district councils requesting information with the least possible delay on the following points:—(1.) Whether there is any exceptional distress in the district, and how far this is due to circumstances peculiar to the locality or to the severe weather?—(2.) What is being done to meet the distress by public authorities or by voluntary agencies, and the average daily number relieved by each of the agencies during the week ended Saturday, the 16th February?—(3.) Is an unemployed register maintained, and with what result?—(4.) Have you any suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving such distress?—The Board will be much obliged by your furnishing them, at the earliest possible moment, with the information required by the Committee, in as much detail as can promptly be given. The

Chairman—continued.

Board rely on your immediately taking such steps as may be necessary for the purpose of furnishing the requisite particulars.

"I am, Sir,
"Your obedient Servant,
"*Hugh Owen*,
"Secretary.

"The Mayor or
"The Chairman of the District Council."

1. YOU are Secretary to the Local Government Board and have held that office for some years?—I have been Secretary of the Board since 1882; and from 1876 to 1882 I was one of the Assistant Secretaries of the Board.

2. The Committee are desirous of obtaining information as to the extent of the distress which has been prevailing during the present winter, so far as can be ascertained from the demands on board of guardians for poor relief. Previously to the severe weather what was the view of the Local Government Board as to the probability of any material increase in the number of persons in receipt of relief through the guardians?—It was believed that the conditions were generally more favourable than in the corresponding period last year. As the month of January proceeded, and there was some reason for thinking that distress was increasing, though not to any very serious extent, in particular

Chairman—continued.

districts, it was determined to address a circular letter to the guardians of the several metropolitan unions and to the guardians of a certain number of provincial unions in which were the largest centres of population.

3. When was that circular issued?—On the 24th of January last.

4. What precisely was the information you asked for?—The circular ran thus: "I am directed by the Local Government Board to state that they are desirous of being informed whether there has been during the recent winter months any material increase in the number of applications for relief, and how the number of such applications compare with those in the corresponding weeks in the previous two or three years; and also whether the guardians are anticipating any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal, and whether they contemplate that any exceptional arrangements will be necessary to enable them to do so satisfactorily. If the guardians consider that there is distress of an exceptional character amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief, the Board will be obliged by being informed of the views of the guardians as to the extent of such distress, the classes and occupations of the workpeople among whom the distress is most marked, and the probability of its continuance. They will also be glad to be informed to what extent it is considered that such distress is in excess of, or less than, that in the corresponding periods of other recent years."

5. So that the circular letter asked for information both as to the facts with respect to applications to the guardians for relief and the views of the guardians as to whether there was distress of an exceptional character among persons of the working classes who had not applied for relief?—That was so.

6. Referring first to provincial unions, to what number of unions was the circular issued?—It was issued to 93, and up to the end of last week 70 replies had been received. Some of them were sent within a very few days after the circular was issued, but in other cases replies continued to be received from time to time, so that some of them have been received only within the last two or three days.

7. Will you tell the Committee what was the general effect of the replies as to whether there was a material increase in the number of applications for relief?—In about 50 out of the 70 cases it was stated that there was no material increase, and in almost every one of them it was stated that the guardians did not anticipate any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they had to deal; and in only a few instances did they intimate that they contemplated any exceptional arrangements to enable them to deal satisfactorily with the destitution. As, however, some of those replies were received very shortly after the circular was issued, the condition of things has in some cases altered in consequence of the continued frost.

8. As regards the distress amongst persons of the working class, who have not applied for relief, what was the general effect of the replies?—It is

Chairman—continued.

very difficult to summarise them satisfactorily either as to applications for relief or as to the extent of destitution amongst persons of the working class. I have the replies that have been received here. I could, if it were thought desirable, read a few, taking them in alphabetical order; I could then give the names of the unions from which the letters have been received, and in any particular case where it might be desired I could read the answer, or I could, of course, put them in.

9. I think it would be desirable if you would read a certain number of answers in their alphabetical order, and then give a list of the unions from which replies have been received, so that any honourable Member could ask for the answer from any particular place in which he was interested, where he thought it would be instructive?—The first is *Ashton-under-Lyne Union.* The letter was received on the 6th of February, and says: "There has been an increase in this Union in the number of recipients of relief in comparison with the corresponding week of last year to the extent of 284 persons, but a decrease in comparison with the corresponding week of 1893 of 207 persons, when it should be stated we were in the midst of a twenty weeks' stoppage of the cotton mills. The present severe weather is, of course, affecting the outdoor workers, but a change for the better in the weather, which we may now reasonably expect very soon, will remove the destitution which has arisen amongst those following outdoor pursuits. The guardians have reason to believe that as a consequence of the stoppage of a large cotton mill in the township of Hurst, and two or three smaller ones in the township of Mossley, both townships being within this union, considerable poverty exists in those particular districts, but they trust that an early resumption of work will take place, and that the distress will not assume a very acute phase, but if unfortunately it should, no doubt it will be met, and satisfactorily dealt with, without resorting to any course different to what has hitherto been pursued. The guardians certainly do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting the destitution, and do not contemplate that any exceptional arrangements will be necessary." The next reply is from *Auckland Union,* Durham. The letter was received on the 15th of February, and says: "There has not been during the recent winter months any material increase in the number of applications for relief. The guardians are not anticipating any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal, and they do not contemplate that any exceptional arrangements will be necessary. The Board do not think there is any distress of an exceptional character amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief." The next reply is from the *Barnsley Union,* Yorkshire, and was received on the 5th of February: "There is no exceptional distress in this union, the number in receipt of out-relief being on the 26th ultimo 1,290, as against 1,518 in the corresponding week of 1894, and as against 1,293 in the same week of 1893. The guardians do not apprehend any immediate increase in the number of applications for out-relief." The next is from *Barrow-in-Furness.*

It

Chairman—continued.

It was received on the 7th of February, and it states that, in the opinion of the guardians, "there has not been during the winter months any material increase in the number of applications for relief. The numbers of such applications during the last three years have been as under: 17th week of Lady Day, Half year, 1893," the number was 53; for the corresponding week of 1894 it was 94; and for the corresponding week of 1895, it was 46. "The number of persons (excluding lunatics and vagrants) in receipt of relief for the corresponding weeks are as under: 1893, indoor, 223; out-door, 749; total, 972." Then in 1894 the total was 1,052; and in 1895 the total was 958. "The guardians do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting the distress with which they have to deal, and they do not contemplate that any exceptional arrangements will be necessary to enable them to do so satisfactorily. The guardians do consider that there has been some distress of an exceptional character among persons of the working class who have not applied for relief. The guardians are not able to form an opinion as to the extent of such distress. The distress has existed mainly among workers at the iron and steel works, employment there having been very slack during the winter. The guardians are afraid that this distress is likely to continue until a revival in the iron and steel trades takes place. The guardians do not consider that such distress has been anything like so severe as during the winter of 1893–94."

Mr. *Jackson.*

10. That was the time of the coal strike, was it not?—They are referring to the distress among the workers at the iron and steel works.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

11. Was not the improvement due to the placing of some Government orders for shipbuilding?—I do not know; that is the only information they give.

Chairman.

12. What is the next case?—The next is *Barton-upon-Irwell Union.* In their reply the guardians enclose certain reports from their relieving officers. The letter from the guardians was received on the 16th of February, but the reports of the relieving officers are dated the 5th and 6th of February. One of them says: "There has been no exceptional distress in consequence of the severity of the weather in my district. In the 5th (week) of January 1893 there were 159 persons receiving outdoor relief at a cost of 11*l.* 18*s.* 6*d.* In the 5th of January 1894 there were 140 at a cost of 11*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.*, and in the 5th week of January 1895 there are 182 at a cost of 12*l.* 17*s.* The increase this year has been caused by non-able-bodied males and females and widows with children." The other relieving officer says: "There is an increase of about 4*l.* in the cost of outdoor relief in my district for the week ending Monday last as compared with the corresponding week of last year; which is accounted for under two heads, viz.: sickness, and want of work.

Chairman—continued.

Fifteen cases were relieved owing to sickness, at a cost of 3*l.* 16*s.*, as against six cases at a cost of 1*l.* 9*s.* last year; and four cases of want of work at a cost of 1*l.* 6*s.* 2*d.* for the week; last year, none. I am not of opinion that exceptional distress exists to any marked degree in my district, beyond what is caused by the present severe weather, which is of a temporary nature, and may, I think, be dealt with in the ordinary way." Then the next is *Bath;* this letter was received on the 31st of January, "There has not been any increase in the applications for relief, and the guardians do not know that there is any distress of an exceptional character amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief." The next is *Birmingham;* this letter was received on the 29th of January: "There has been no material increase in the number of applicants for relief in this parish. The applications for relief were about the same as usual, and the guardians have had no difficulty whatever in meeting the destitution which does exist, neither do they contemplate that any exceptional arrangements may be necessary." The next reply is from *Blackburn Union,* and was received on the 11th of February: "I beg to enclose for your information a tabulated statement showing the number of persons in receipt of outdoor relief during the four weeks ended the 8th instant, and the amount paid to them, and also the number of persons relieved in the workhouse on the last day in each of the same four weeks. Similar information is given with regard to the corresponding weeks of the years 1891, 1892, 1893, and 1894. It will, therefore, be seen that the extent of poverty and destitution is very greatly in excess of three of the years, namely, 1891, 1892, and 1894, and also that it is in excess of the distress in the year 1893, during which year it will be remembered that the distress then existing was due to the Cotton Strike. At present the guardians and their officers do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting the existing destitution, but if the severe weather which we are now experiencing continue, it is feared that exceptional arrangements will be necessary to enable the guardians to satisfactorily perform their onerous duties. The rates of the union have been very much relieved by the generosity of individual wealthy ratepayers, one of whom recently gave 1,000*l.* for the relief of the needy poor of Blackburn, and two others 200*l.* each or more. I might say at this point that the distress in the union is mainly felt at Blackburn, whilst in the neighbouring Borough of Darwen (which forms part of the union) there is practically no exceptional distress. With regard to the second paragraph of your letter, I am to say that the guardians are of opinion that there is considerable distress amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief. This distress has, however, to a very considerable extent, been relieved by the generosity of the persons to whom I have before referred, and to a lesser extent by other charitable tradesmen. The particular classes of the working people mostly affected are (a), the cotton operatives who have very little work indeed, owing to the depressed

Chairman—continued.

state of their trade; (b), the outdoor workers who cannot be employed owing to the severity of the frost. Generally during the severe weather in the winter months the wives of the outworkers obtain employment in the cotton mills, and are thus enabled to earn sufficient money to tide over temporary difficulties, but at this period, owing to the state of the cotton trade, a less amount of work is to be found for the female cotton operatives The guardians are afraid that there is not likely to be any marked diminution of the present distress until there is a change in the weather, or until there is a substantial improvement in the cotton industry." The statement enclosed in that letter shows that, taking the total number of persons in receipt of outdoor relief in each year from 1891 to 1895, in the sixth week of the March quarter, the numbers are: in 1891, 1,520; in 1892, 1,414; in 1893, 2,025; in 1894, 1,653; and in 1895, 2,294. The number of inmates in the workhouse had increased from 871 in 1891 to 927 in 1895, but I observe that in 1893 the number of inmates in the workhouse was 954. The next reply is from *Bradford;* it was received on the 6th of February. The guardians "fear that distress of an acute and exceptional character does at the present time exist in this union, as evidenced by the fact that the applications for parochial relief and the number of paupers relieved has lately increased enormously. In the week ending the 4th of December the number relieved outdoor was 2,568, while the number relieved for the week ending 29th January was 3,579, or an increase of 1,011 persons granted outdoor relief. The returns of pauperism (exclusive of lunatics and vagrants) for the nine weeks of December and January in each of the years 1892-3, 1893-4, and 1894-5 were as follows." Then there follows a good deal in the way of figures; but perhaps it will be enough for me to say that in 1892-3, in the week ending December 4th, the number was 2,543; in 1893-4 it was 3,210, and in 1894-5 it was 3,440; and taking the last week of the period, namely, the week ending January 29th, in 1892-3 the number was 2,833; in 1893-4 it was 3,274; and in 1894-5 it was 4,520. These returns, the Board will observe, show a very considerable increase. At the meeting of the guardians on the 23rd of January, the number of the men on the books for working on the "test" was 269. At this meeting, after a discussion on the subject, the guardians appointed a deputation to seek an interview with the Bradford Corporation, that body being the "sanitary authority" for all the parishes in the union, with the view of the corporation being urged to find work for some of the unemployed. This interview took place on the 25th January, when the guardians urged upon the corporation the necessity of work being found for the unemployed of such a nature, if possible, as would not carry with it the taint of pauperism, and suggested that certain works which the corporation had in view might be proceeded with at once. The corporation had a meeting on the 29th, when they resolved to employ men in clearing the streets of snow, and that arrangements should be made for immediate commencement of certain works. This action of the corporation, which was put into force the following day, had the effect of at once reducing the number of men on the books for test work to 26—700 men of the unemployed class being given work. The number of test men on the books to-day is 40. The guardians believe the distress to be caused by the depression in the staple trade of the district, and by the partial closing of the works of the Bowling Iron Company, together with the extreme severity of the weather. With a change in the weather, enabling outdoor labourers to get to their ordinary employment, the guardians anticipate a great reduction in the present pauperism. The guardians hope that they will not meet with any great difficulty in dealing with the applications made to them or in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal; but if such should unfortunately occur, they will immediately communicate with your Board." The next reply is from *Bolton*, but it merely states that the guardians were making inquiries, and would furnish information. The next letter is from *Brighton;* it was received on the 31st of January: "I am directed by the guardians to inform you—(1) That there has been during the present winter months no material increase in the number of applications for relief. (2) That the guardians do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal. (3.) That they do not contemplate that any exceptional arrangements will be necessary to enable them to do so satisfactorily. (4.) That the distress amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief is not in excess of that in the corresponding periods of recent years. (5.) That such distress as actually exists is principally amongst labourers in the building trade, who will resume their occupation as soon as the state of the weather permits." The next reply is from *Bristol.* It was received on the 28th January: "The guardians regret to be obliged to say that there has been during the last three weeks a considerable increase in the number of applications for relief, as you will see from the enclosed tabulated statement. This is entirely due to the large number of able-bodied men relieved on account of want of work, and who perform a specified task of work. Last week the number of cases so relieved was 90, representing 422 persons. In the corresponding week of last year the number of such cases was only 22. The guardians do not anticipate any difficulty in dealing with the destitution now existing, and think that in a few weeks there will probably be a great improvement if the weather should continue favourable. With regard to the existence of distress of an exceptional character amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief, the guardians fear that there does exist a certain amount of such distress amongst ordinary masons and other labourers through the absence of works of any extent in progress at the present time. They think this distress is in excess of recent years." The next reply is from *Burnley.* It was received on the 5th of February, and says that "although there has been an appreciable increase in the number of applications for relief, it has not been sufficiently great to cause any alarm." "The guardians do not anticipate

Chairman—continued.

anticipate any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal." "The distress is not of an exceptional character, and the increase is chiefly caused by the severe weather and by what is anticipated to be only a temporary depression in the weaving industry." Then comes *Burton-upon-Trent*, the reply being received on the 15th of February. The guardians state that "so far as this union is concerned there has not, during the recent winter, been any material increase in the number of applications for relief as compared with the previous two or three years, and they have experienced no difficulty in dealing with the applicants for outdoor relief in cases of destitution, and, therefore, they do not think that any exceptional arrangements are requisite in this union. The guardians have, however, reason to believe that there is at the present time a good deal of distress amongst persons of the working class in Burton-upon-Trent who are temporarily out of employment owing to the severe weather, and a local relief committee has been formed for the purpose of raising subscriptions to start a temporary relief fund to afford assistance to these persons. This committee, with the Charity Organisation Society in the town, are now dispensing relief to the most necessitous of these cases, and the guardians have not as yet received any applications for relief from amongst this class of persons, and they do not anticipate that they will be applied to to any great extent, as it is generally considered that the present distress is of a temporary nature only." The next is from *Bury Union*, Lancashire. The letter was received on the 16th of February: "During the recent winter months there has been no material increase in the number of paupers in receipt of outdoor relief, nor in the amount of such relief, and, in comparison with the corresponding week in the previous five years, we find the number of outdoor paupers about the same. But with regard to indoor paupers the number in the house is considerably in excess in comparison with the last five years. The guardians do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal, and do not contemplate that any exceptional arrangements will be necessary to enable them to do so satisfactorily. There are no indications of distress of an exceptional character amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief. If the present severe weather continues, no doubt the number of applications for relief will increase, but the guardians think that their present officers and means of relief will be sufficient to cope with the extra work." The next is from *Cambridge;* the reply was received on the 14th of February: "There has been during the recent winter months no material increase in the number of applications for relief. Beyond a slightly increased sick-list, there is nothing abnormal in either numbers or expenditure. The guardians do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal, nor do they contemplate that any exceptional arrangements will be necessary to enable them to do so satisfactorily. During the past year, complaints of want of work have gradually increased; but ample provision has been made to meet this by the opening of the stoneyard by

Chairman—continued.

the Town Council, where fair wages may be earned by those who are industrious." The next letter is from *Cardiff*, received on the 7th of February: "The number of paupers relieved in the union during the present season and the two previous ones compare as follows." Then there follows a mass of figures showing the average of 13 weeks for the quarter ended Christmas, and the numbers for the first five weeks in the Lady-day quarter; perhaps I may take the fifth week of the Lady-day quarter. In 1892-93, the total number out-door was 2,984; in 1893–94 it was 3,085; and in 1894–95 it was 3,022. Taking the totals including indoor, the number in 1892–93 was 3,983; in 1893-94 it was 4,115, and in 1894-95, it was 4,174. The letter goes on: "These figures show that while up to Christmas the number of indoor paupers was only slightly in excess of last year, during the last few weeks it has been very much larger, and the guardians have had some little difficulty in accommodating the male inmates of the workhouse. The number in receipt of outdoor relief is, however, less than last year, and altogether the guardians did not consider, as far as regards the applications for relief, that they would have any difficulty in meeting destitution, or would need to resort to any exceptional arrangements for doing so, although they feel that the pressure on their indoor accommodation each winter is such that it will soon be necessary for them to increase the accommodation to provide for the growing population of the union. The guardians, however, having inquired from the Corporation of Cardiff how many persons had applied to them for employment have been furnished with the following information." Season 1892-3, number of applications, 759; number given work, 204. Season 1893-4, 779 applications, and 284 to whom work was given, and up to the 29th of January of the present year 482 have applied, and 173 have had work given to them. "About 75 per cent. of the persons enrolled on the register were unskilled labourers. Having regard to the large number of men to whom the corporation have not given work, and to the present severity of the weather, the guardians have now resolved to open a labour yard in which able-bodied men applying for relief can be set to work."

13. If I may interrupt you, would you say that the answers you have read are fair samples of the answers you have received?—I think the fairest answer to that is that I have simply taken the unions in alphabetical order.

14. The first two or three letters of the alphabet might possibly accidentally possess a character which did not pervade the whole of the replies, but having looked at them all yourself, should you say that the replies you have read are fair samples?—I should say certainly they are fair samples.

15. Do you think it would be necessary for the information of the Committee to have the rest of the answers read, or would it be sufficient if you read the names of the unions so that any honourable Member could ask for the report for any particular place which he thought would be specially instructive; perhaps the latter course would save the time of the Committee. The metropolitan districts we will take later; as

Chairman—continued.

regards the provincial unions they represent, I understand, considerable centres of population?—Yes. These circular letters were only addressed to the guardians of 93 unions which comprised the chief centres of population.

Mr. *Jackson.*

16. In sending out these 90 circulars I understand you had regard to the population in the various unions?—Yes. Mr. Chamberlain, you may remember, issued a circular in 1886 to a certain number of unions in connection with the distress existing at that time, and we have addressed these circulars to the same unions as were written to then. They are all unions with a large population.

Mr. *Burns.*

17. To how many unions was this general circular addressed, and how many replies have you had?—We have written to 93 unions, and we have received replies from about 70; I am excluding London.

Chairman.

18. Will you be good enough to read the names of the unions after "Cardiff" from which replies have been received, and then honourable Members can have the reply read in any particular case they may desire?—We have replies from Carlisle, Chester, Chesterfield in Derbyshire, Chorley in Lancashire, Chorlton Union in Lancashire——

Mr. *Mather.*

19. Would you give us the answer you have received from Chorlton, which is a very large union?—The letter from *Chorlton* was received on the 28th of January, and it says that "there has not been in this union during the recent winter months any very material increase in the number of applicants for relief, and that no difficulty is anticipated in meeting the destitution with which the guardians have to deal. In one of the relief districts of the union in which several large iron-works and engineering works are situate, and where trade has been depressed, the destitution has been somewhat more severe than in ordinary times, but certainly not more severe than the guardians have experienced in previous winters. In reply to a question put to him at the meeting of the guardians yesterday, the relieving officer of this particular district stated that it was a common thing for men who had been receiving 35*s.* or 36*s.* per week to apply for relief when they had been out of employment for a day or two only." Then the next reply is from Croydon.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

20. Will you give us the reply from Croydon?—The letter from the Clerk to the Croydon Union was received on the 6th of February; he says: "The guardians have made inquiry into the subject, and I am to forward to you, for the information of the Local Government Board, copies of queries which the guardians have addressed to the relieving officers on the subject, together with their replies thereto. I am, however, to add that in order to meet the temporary distress prevailing at the present time in consequence of the bad state of the weather, by reason of which a number of able-bodied men have been out of employment, the guardians have caused the stone-yard to be opened for a short time for the purpose of relieving such distress." Then there are appended the answers given by six relieving officers as to whether there has been any material increase in the number of applications for relief. The relieving officer in No. 1 District says: "There has been no material increase in the number of applications for relief, 1894, 53 men; 1895, 108 men." The answer for No. 2 District is "Very favourable." The relieving officer in No. 3 District says: "I believe there has been a decrease in my district during the last 12 months or two years." The relieving officer in No. 4 District says: "Not any material increase; 1893, stone-yard not open; 1894, 15; 1895, 36." The answer for No. 5 District is "No material increase," and for No. 6 District, "There has been no material increase in the number of applications for relief, all applications made to the board having been from aged people and widows with children dependent, and no able-bodied man has applied to me for relief solely on account of want of work." To the second question, whether any difficulty was anticipated in meeting the destitution which was likely to prevail, the answer in No. 1 District was, "No, should the severe weather continue I shall require assistance." The answer in No. 2 District was "No." The answer in No. 3 District was "No. I anticipate an increase of able-bodied applicants should the frost and snow continue, however." "No," is the answer given for the three remaining districts. To the next question whether exceptional arrangements were likely to be necessary, the reply from the first two districts is "No." No. 3 District replies, "I do not think there will be any need to make any exceptional arrangements." No. 4 District replies, "This is met by the stone-yard being open." No. 5 District replies, "An assistant required;" and the answer in No. 6 District is "No." In reply to the question whether distress of an exceptional character prevails amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief, the answer in No. 1 District is, "Most of the men out of employment in my district are men employed in the building trade. A great number have informed me that they have work to go to as soon as the weather will permit, which I believe to be correct." In No. 2 District the reply is, "Only amongst the bricklayer and labour class who cannot work on account of the weather. It appears from looking through the books for some years past, that the same persons avail themselves of the opportunity of entering the stone-yard as soon as opened." The reply in No. 3 District is, "There appears to be more able-bodied men out of work at the present time in my district than there was this time last year, especially amongst the outdoor artizan class, which I anticipate will alter when the weather breaks up." In No. 4 District the answer is, "No. The greater part of the work in Mitcham, consisting of market-garden work, is necessarily stopped when the

Mr. *Pickersgill*—continued.

Mr. *Pickersgill*—continued.

the frost is severe in the winter, and will continue during the hard weather." In No. 5 District the answer is, "General run of these men are labourers and painters, and men in the building trade." In No. 6 District the relieving officer says: "I am aware that a number of ground labourers are by stress of weather out of work; but they are in one part of the district provided with some temporary employment by the local landowners." Then in reply to the question: "To what extent do you consider that such distress is in excess of or less than in the corresponding periods of other recent years?" The replies are as follows: In No. 1 District, "Not in excess to previous years;" in District No. 2, "Perusing the statistical portion of this district I should say this year, considering the weather, is nothing much in excess of previous years;" in No. 3 District, "There appears to be more men out of work now than there were last year, but not so many as about four years ago, but then there was a very severe winter;" in District No. 4, "I do not consider that the distress is in excess of recent years;" in District No. 5, "No material distress. Average about the same as this last two or three years;" and in District No. 6, "So far as I have been able to ascertain by inquiry in the district the amount of distress does not exceed that of previous years." Then comes *Darlington*.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie*.

21. Would you read the reply from Darlington?—The letter from *Darlington* was received on the 16th of February: "Owing to the closing of the works of the Darlington Steel and Iron Co., Limited, early in October the guardians have had in operation stone-yards for the last 16 weeks. The works in question employed some 700 men and boys, of whom 283 are now in the stone-yards. I am also to say that, owing to the prolonged frost, building and out-door work generally has been suspended for several weeks, and that the town is suffering from the general trade depression; but there is no acute distress in the union except the case of the steel workers, which has been dealt with as above." That is to say, orders have been given apparently for the stone-yard, 283 persons formerly employed as steel-workers being now in the stone-yard.

22. Does the letter say that 700 men have been thrown idle by the closing of the steel works?—No, it says 700 men and boys were employed, of whom 283 are now in the stone-yard. Then there are letters from Derby, Dewsbury in Yorkshire, Dover, Exeter, Gloucester, Great Yarmouth, Hartlepool, Haslingden in Lancashire, Hastings, Keighley in Yorkshire, and Kingston-upon-Hull.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley*.

23. Perhaps you will give us the reply from Kingston-upon-Hull as it is a shipping port?—The letter from *Kingston-upon-Hull*, received the 6th of February, says: "There has recently been in the districts comprised within this union a material increase in the number of applications for relief. The total number of persons relieved during the week ending the 29th of January last was 2,413 as compared with 1,971 for the corresponding week in the year 1894, and 1,931 for the corresponding week in the year 1893. The increase is spread over all classes of paupers, as the following table will show." Taking the one class, males, able-bodied, the numbers are 62 in 1893, 71 in 1894, and 123 in 1895. Then the letter continues: "Up to the present time the applicants have been dealt with by the ordinary methods, and the guardians have no reason to anticipate any difficulty in meeting the destitution which undoubtedly does prevail at the present time, chiefly amongst the dock and general labourers, owing, no doubt, to a large extent, to the severe weather now experienced; nor do the guardians contemplate any exceptional arrangements. The guardians and the relieving officers are not aware of any exceptional distress amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief."

Mr. *Round*.

24. Might we have the reply from Great Yarmouth read?—The letter from *Great Yarmouth*, received on the 28th January, says: "There has been a slight increase in the number of applications for relief during this winter, in consequence of the severity of the weather and floods. A special meeting of the Board was held yesterday, at which a large number of able-bodied cases were dealt with, temporary relief being afforded. It is proposed to provide some work for this class in collecting and removing shingle from the beach, which will be utilised hereafter for concreting. A communication has also been sent to the Town Council, suggesting that the sanitary authority should mature schemes for works upon which these men can be employed." Then the next is Leeds.

Mr. *Jackson*.

25. I should like to hear the reply from Leeds?—The letter from the clerk of the *Leeds* Union was a very early one—it was received on the 2nd of February. He says: "I am directed by the guardians of this union to send herewith a comparative statement of indoor and outdoor relief for the first four weeks of the Lady-day quarter of each year, 1892-3-4-5. In the opinion of this board there has not been such a material increase in the number of applications for relief as to cause the guardians to anticipate any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal. They therefore do not contemplate making any exceptional arrangements. Neither do the guardians consider that there is distress of an exceptional character amongst the working classes who may not have applied for relief. Indeed, there does not appear to be so much local 'outcry' by and on behalf of the 'out of work' class as in preceding years." Then the statement sent with that letter shows that, taking the out-door relief during the first four weeks of the Lady-day quarter in 1892, the average weekly number was 1,468; in 1893 it was 1,480; in 1894 it was 1,540, and in 1895 it was 1,640. Then taking the in-door cases, the weekly average number was in

Mr. *Jackson*—continued.

1892, 1,043; in 1893 it was 1,121; in 1894 it was 1,238, and in 1895 it was 1,282. Then the next case is the Leicester Union.

Mr. *Logan.*

26. I should like to hear the reply from Leicester?—The letter from *Leicester* was received on the 7th of February, and states: "There has been an increase this year in the numbers in receipt of relief, and during the week ended January 26th last there were 300 more persons being relieved than in the corresponding week of last year. At the present time there are about 20 able-bodied men on the labour test, which is about the same as last year."

Mr. *Burns.*

27. Is there any definition given in that letter of the trades and callings of the men who are being relieved? Do you know whether they are bootmakers, or are they general labourers?—No. The letter refers afterwards to the depression in the shoe trade by reason of the more extensive use of machinery and the applications from men usually employed in out-door labour. The letter goes on, "I enclose a comparative statement showing the numbers in receipt of relief on the 1st day of January 1893, 1894, and 1895, as classified in the statistical portions of the in and out-door relief books. There is no doubt that for some time past a large number of persons (chiefly in the hosiery and shoe trades) have been out of employment, many in the shoe trade having been displaced by the more extensive use of machinery. I have ascertained that the Leicester Trades Council have opened a public relief fund, and have relieved 1,450 different cases with kind at an expense of 650*l.* They find the applications that are now being made are principally from the class of men who are usually employed on outdoor labour. Last year the municipal authorities opened a labour office, and relieved the numbers as shown in the annexed Report. The guardians are of opinion that the destitution now prevailing is not likely to continue in its present acute form after the severe weather, as at present, is abated. The staple industries of the town are improving, and will be finding employment for a larger number of workpeople in a very short time." The tables appended to that letter are rather difficult to summarize.

Mr. *Logan.*

28. I should like to ask whether they give the total number of unemployed in Leicester; I ask the question, because the Trades Council has made a pretty exhaustive examination into the subject, and has taken a census of all the unemployed, and I should like to know whether the authorities who have replied to your circular have given you those figures at all?—I have the total numbers of persons of the different classes in receipt of Poor-law relief, but not more than that.

Mr. *Jackson.*

29. You have, no doubt, the total number of the cases relieved outdoor at the different periods; will you give us those?—Yes. In 1893 the number was 2,947; in 1894, 3,113, and in 1895, 3,304.

Mr. *Logan.*

30. Those figures, I presume, are the result of applying the workhouse test; they do not give you any information as to the number of people unemployed who have not applied for relief?—They only give us the number of persons actually relieved.

Mr. *Mather.*

31. Do the Leicester Guardians give any information upon the other paragraph of your circular in regard to what distress there is amongst working people out of employment who have not applied for relief?—There is some reference to it in a part of the letter I have already read. I will read it again: "There is no doubt that for some time past a large number of persons (chiefly in the hosiery and shoe trades) have been out of employment, many in the shoe trade having been displaced by the more extensive use of machinery."

Mr. *Logan.*

32. I was putting my question with a view to testing this reply from the guardians sent to the Local Government Board, because I know intimately the condition of Leicester, and according to the return I have, on the 11th of December there were 1,511 unemployed in Leicester, which I presume would include those relieved by the guardians?—May I say with regard to that, that the clerk to the guardians refers to that fact in his letter where he says: "I have ascertained that the Leicester Trades Council have open a public relief fund, and have relieved 1,450 different cases with kind at an expense of 650*l.*" Those would, I believe, be outside the number relieved by the guardians.

Mr. *Bolton.*

33. Are you sure the 1,500 referred to in the honourable Member's return and in the return from the guardians do not comprise the Poor Law cases?—I think that clearly would be so.

Mr. *Logan.*

34. In the present case the Council have taken considerable pains to ascertain who it is that makes the application to them, so that the men do not get relief from the Council, and also relief under the Poor Law. In the report of the guardians which you have read, they say the bulk of the unemployed are shoe hands and hosiery hands; the return I have says that out of the 1,500 that were unemployed on 11th of December, 406 were shoe hands; old frame-work knitters (those, of course, are the hosiery hands), 142; general labourers of all trades, 417; painters, 30; other trades, 116; and then there were shoe hands unclassified, 400; so that it would seem there were a large number of men unemployed in Leicester who were not connected with the shoe trade?—The particulars are not given beyond what I have read.

Mr. *Burns.*

35. Would you not be disposed to supplement the figures sent to you by the boards of guardians by adding the total number of men in the building trades, and other trades of a seasonal character, who by frost and climatic reasons were thrown out

Mr. *Burns*—continued.

out of work?—I do not see how we could do that. If any Department could do it, it is the Board of Trade in connection with their Labour Department.

36. You are getting away from my point; perhaps you do not understand my question; supposing you had a return from the Poor Law guardians in Leicester, saying that they can account, through their statistics, and their officers' returns, for 600 people who, in their opinion, are out of work, would you not be disposed to say that two-thirds of the men in the building trade and other trades which are stopped by frost and for climatic reasons should be added to that total as being out of work?—Clearly, if during a period of frost you add to the ordinary class of paupers considerably by reason of the want of labour in the building trade or any other, those men should be added to the total.

37. I do not mean those out of work of whom the guardians have official knowledge through their applying for relief; I mean the men who are thrown out of employment and will not apply for relief. To take as an illustration the 200,000 men in the building trade; of those it is safe to assume that not 2,000 will apply to the Poor Law Authorities. Would you not admit at once that 100,000, at least, of those men are thrown out of employment by the frost, and would you not add that number to these figures of the Poor Law Returns?—I am only giving the replies sent by the guardians to our circular with regard to the distress which may be prevailing.

Mr. *Jackson.*

38. In which they are asked to express their opinion as to whether the distress is exceptional or not in their district?—Yes.

Mr. *Lawrence.*

39. Before we leave Leicester, may I ask whether this is a board of guardians where out-relief is given strictly or freely?—So far as I recollect, there is nothing very exceptional in its administration. Then there are replies from Lincoln and Liverpool.

40. Would you give us the reply from Liverpool?—This letter from *Liverpool* was received on the 4th of February: "The circumstances of the present winter, in regard to the applications for relief, differ in no material respect from those of previous years. This is sufficiently evidenced by the return which I enclose herewith relating to the four years ended January 1895. The select vestry see no reason to anticipate more than ordinary difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal, and they have not, as yet, contemplated the necessity of exceptional arrangements for the purpose of enabling them to do so satisfactorily. In reference to your inquiry as to the existence of distress of an exceptional character amongst persons who have not applied for relief, the select vestry direct me to state that they do not feel that they have before them sufficient information to enable them to express any definite or reliable opinion upon the point. That there are amongst the class referred to many persons who are suffering great privations from want of employment, and the general slackness of trade, is unfortunately too true; but whether this distress can be considered exceptional, either in regard to its character or its extent, the select vestry have not the means of ascertaining." To that letter was appended a return showing the number of applications for out-relief during each of the thirteen weeks of the months of November, December, and January of the four years ended January 1895. Perhaps if I take one week it may be sufficient. Taking the last week in January, the thirteenth week of the quarter, in 1892 the number of applications was 56; in 1893 it was 25; in 1894 it was 27; and in 1895 it was 32.

Mr. *Lawrence*—continued.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

41. Does that comprise the whole of Liverpool?—That is for the Parish of Liverpool. There is also a reply from the West Derby Union and Toxteth Park, which would include part of the Borough of Liverpool. Then as regards workhouse orders given, taking the same week in 1892, the number was 249; in 1893 it was 232; in 1894 it was 268; and in 1895 it was 250.

Mr. *Billson.*

42. It should be noticed that this week the local authorities are taking special steps, but those we shall hear about in answer to your new circular, I presume?—Yes. Then there are replies from Macclesfied and Manchester.

Mr. *Mather.*

43. Would you give us the reply from Manchester?—The letter from *Manchester* was received on the 7th of February, and it says: "During the months of December and January last there was no increase in the average weekly number of applications for relief in the township, as compared with the numbers in the corresponding periods of 1892-3 and 1893-4, and although the number of persons in receipt of relief is at present greater than in the corresponding period of last year, the guardians do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they may have to deal, nor do they contemplate that any exceptional arrangements will be necessary to enable them to do so satisfactorily. Should, however, the present severe weather continue, they may find it necessary to open the labour yard for a short time to enable them to deal with the cases of able-bodied men thrown temporarily out of employment." "As respects the condition of persons of the working class who have not applied for relief, the guardians have reason to believe that there is some distress of a more or less exceptional character amongst persons of this class resident in the township who are engaged in the iron and cotton industries." Then there are letters from Merthyr Tydfil, Middlesbrough, and Newport, Monmouthshire.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

44. Will you give us the reply from Newport?—The letter from the *Newport Union* was received on the 29th of January: "There has been

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

an increase in the number of applications for relief over those received in the corresponding week of last year, but the guardians anticipate no difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal. As in former years the guardians have arranged with the town council of the County Borough of Newport who will find work in stone breaking for able-bodied men. This arrangement, however, has not to any considerable extent been taken advantage of by applicants." Then there are replies from Northampton and Norwich.

Mr. *Round.*

45. Would you give us the reply from Norwich?—The letter from *Norwich* was received on the 8th of February: "During the present winter months there has been an increase in the number of applications for relief in Norwich as compared with those in the previous three years as shown by the statement of persons relieved during the first four weeks of the years 1892–3–4 and 5 and the guardians do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal, and do not contemplate that any exceptional arrangements will be necessary to enable them to do so satisfactorily, and for special needy cases the town council have assisted in some measure in providing work." Then the statement enclosed in the letter shows that the number in 1892 of outdoor poor was 2,759; in 1893, it was 2,785; in 1894, it was 2,899; and in 1895, it was 3,138. Then the next case is Nottingham.

Mr. *Logan.*

46. Might we have the Report as to Nottingham?—The letter from *Nottingham* was received on the 15th of February: "There has not been during the past few months any material increase in the number of applications for relief. The number of persons and amount of relief in the third week in this quarter show a considerable increase as compared with the corresponding periods of 1893 and 1894, but these increases have been gradual, and are mostly in relief of not able-bodied paupers, as will be seen from the following figures: Not able-bodied in 1893, 1,326; 1894, 1,415; 1895, 1,538. Able-bodied and temporarily disabled, 1893, 350; 1894, 394; 1895, 412. Then come the number of children under 16. The letter continues: "The guardians do not anticipate any difficulty in dealing with cases which come before them other than that necessarily caused by the overcrowded state of the workhouse, to which your attention has frequently been called. There is undoubtedly some amount of distress amongst persons of the working class, caused by the long continued depression in the staple industries of the town—lace and hosiery, and dependent trades. The frost of the past few weeks has caused considerable distress amongst the labouring classes, many of whom are out of work, but it is hoped temporarily so only. Very few of them have applied for relief. The outdoor labour test-yards in connection with this union have not been opened for the past six years, and the guardians are anxious to avoid the necessity for opening them. There would be no difficulty in

Mr. *Logan*—continued.

doing so if the workhouse was at all adequate to the requirements of the union. If a considerable number of able-bodied men are afforded out-relief, and as a consequence the labour-yards are opened it will be owing more to the want of accommodation and the opportunity of testing the cases than to the increase of destitution. I need hardly point out that in large urban unions there is always a class of persons ready to become a charge upon the rates if the least opportunity offers. This is the class which the guardians are most anxious not to encourage. A few years ago there were 200 to 300 able-bodied men and their families having relief in this union, and the guardians were paying 450*l.* a week in out relief. The guardians determined that this should no longer continue, and they caused all the cases to be carefully revised, with the result that workhouse orders were offered and declined in the majority of cases, and gradually the whole of the men and their families ceased to be chargeable. Since that time the labour yards have been closed, and no applications for relief of this class have been made. Yet the trade of the town unfortunately is no better to-day than on the occasion in question. It is hoped that as soon as the frost goes work will be resumed and the distress amongst out-of-work men will be less marked. The Mayor of Nottingham is appealing for funds with which to alleviate the distress caused by the continuance of the frost. This appeal will no doubt result satisfactorily, and such temporary help be afforded as will enable the labouring classes out of work to tide over the period of enforced idleness. I am asked to assure you that whilst the guardians are anxious to keep the cost of the relief of the poor within reasonable limits, they are not unmindful of the destitution existing, and will continue to do all they can to alleviate it as far as possible." Then the next report is from Oldham.

Mr. *Whiteley.*

47. Will you give us the results for *Oldham* summarily?—It is a very short report: "There has been no material increase in the applications for relief in this union during the present winter. The number of inmates of the workhouse has been slightly below that of the corresponding period of last year; that of out-relief cases about 300 to 350 more per week, an increase of 14 to 16 per cent. The guardians do not consider that there is distress of an exceptional character amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief." That is dated the 31st of January. Then the next is Oxford, then Plymouth, and then Pontypridd.

Mr. *Mather.*

48. Would you give us the reply from *Pontypridd*?—"There has been during the recent winter no increase in the number of applications for relief in this union, and the guardians do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting destitution." That reply was received on the 5th of February. The guardians enclose a statement showing the amount of out-relief in the different

Mr. *Mather*—continued.

different weeks. Then there are replies from Preston and Reading.

Mr. *Randell.*

49. May I ask whether you have got a letter from Pontypool, in Monmouthshire?—No; no letter was sent to Pontypool.

50. Do you know that there are in Pontypool and the immediate district 2,700 miners and other men out of employment, and that with occasional days' employment only, those men have been out of employment permanently for the last two years and a-half; with the Chairman's permission, I should like you to send to this district for a return to be made to you on the subject; perhaps you will make a note of it?—The circular asking for the information desired by the Committee was sent yesterday. Then there are replies from Rochdale, Rotherham, Salford, Scarborough, Sheffield (merely stating they are making enquiries), Southampton, South Shields, Stockport——

Mr. *Whiteley.*

51. Would you read the report from Stockport?—The letter from *Stockport* was received on the 30th of January, and says: "There is now and has been for a considerable period an abnormal number of persons in receipt of relief in the Stockport Union. The number of persons now on the books is more than double the number in receipt of relief at the corresponding period of any year since 1880. The guardians, however, do not think that any exceptional arrangements will be necessary to enable them to deal satisfactorily with the applications for relief made to them. The guardians have no special information as to what extent distress exists amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief."

52. May I point out that although the guardians say they do not think that any exceptional arrangements will be necessary, exceptional arrangements have been going on, and charitable organisations have been giving relief in a large degree?—In this letter they are referring to exceptional arrangements by themselves. Then there are replies from Stoke Damerel, Sunderland, and Swansea.

Mr. *Randell.*

53. Would you give us the reply from Swansea?—The letter from *Swansea Union* was received on the 15th of February; it states that the matter was referred to a committee whose report is enclosed.

54. What committee was that?—A committee of the guardians. The report states: "The relieving officers were in attendance, and the subjoined statistics show that as compared with the corresponding period of 1892, 1893 and 1894 there is at present a material increase in the number relieved and the amount of relief, but that this is chiefly confined to the districts of Swansea and Llangyfelach, and the increase is largely due to the inability of sons to continue contributing towards their parents since the stoppage and slackness of the works. The committee regret that the guardians have no remunerative work to give the unemployed, but do not anticipate that any difficulty will arise in dealing with the destitution which exists, and which the severity of the weather has much accentuated. The committee desire to point out that the council of the County Borough of Swansea has arranged for the immediate prosecution of undertakings that will give employment to about 100 persons, and has also opened a 'Labour Registry' for the unemployed. The committee understand that the Swansea United District School Board is compelled to erect school buildings at Llangyfelach, Manselton and St. Thomas, and think a deputation should wait on the School Board and urge them to proceed with these undertakings as soon as possible. The Rev. J. Davies promised to arrange for such a deputation being received by the School Board. The parish councils of Cockett and Llansamlet have been asked to undertake any work within their power, and Mr. H. A. Chapman volunteered to attend the next meeting of the Highway Board and ask them to consider the making of new roads. The committee are convinced that there is exceptional distress amongst persons of the working classes who have not and will not apply for relief, and that this is so as regards the skilled and unskilled labour in the tin-plate, the copper, and the steel trades in a marked degree. Several works have been closed, and for the most part the remainder are running short time, and so the depression of several previous years has been greatly intensified. The collieries also are only working short time, partly owing to the severity of the weather, which has also paralysed the building trade, in which for the last six months very little has been doing. The committee hope that as the spring advances a revival will take place in the trades of the district."

Mr. *Randell*—continued.

55. Side by side with that I may mention that in the report from the chief constable of Swansea dated Saturday last, he sets out the number of unemployed in Swansea as 7,759 persons?—I am merely giving you the report made to us by the board of guardians. The report I have just read was dated the 11th of February. They append a statement showing the average total number of paupers relieved during the month of January in the four years 1892 to 1895. In January 1892 the total number was 3,051; in 1893, 3,285; in 1894, 3,279; and in 1895, 3,420.

Chairman.

56. Those are the numbers actually relieved?—That is the average total number of paupers relieved during the month of January in those years.

Mr. *Lawrence.*

57. Is that a union where relief is carefully administered?—I do not remember that there is anything exceptional in its administration; it is not an extremely lax nor an extremely strict union. Then there are replies from Tamworth, Toxteth Park, Tynemouth, Wakefield, Walsall, Warrington, West Bromwich, and West Derby, which includes part of Liverpool as Toxteth Park does.

Mr. *Lawrence*—continued.

58. Would you give us the reply from West Derby or Toxteth Park?—I will take *Toxteth Park*—the letter is dated the 7th of February: "There is now not only no increase, but rather a decrease in the number of applications for relief, as the following figures will show:—Number for the four months ending January 1892, 2,111; January 1893, 1,941; January 1894, 2,027; and January 1895, 1,920. Dock labourers are those who in this township hover most on the confines of pauperism. Owing to an enormous cotton crop imports are large, and work for this class is consequently fairly plentiful. There is scarcity of work amongst artisans connected with shipbuilding and house painting, but it has not resulted in application being made for relief owing to the provision made for themselves in clubs, friendly societies, savings banks, &c. The guardians at the beginning of last year, in conjunction and combination with the neighbouring unions of Liverpool and West Derby, engaged and equipped a central stone-breaking yard in order that the demands of able-bodied men could be legally met. The yard can be opened at almost an hour's notice, and the announcement of this in the public press may have prevented a well-known class who decline assistance if laborious personal exertion be required in return, from applying. It would be a boon if public bodies, and even private persons, contemplating painting would commence at the earliest opportunity." Then there are replies from Wolverhampton and York. That completes the list.

Chairman.

59. That completes the list of returns which you received from the country districts?—Yes.

60. As regards London, I believe you sent out the circular to the unions in London?—Yes.

61. How many are they in number?—There are 30 unions in London, and we received 25 replies, but the same remark applies to them as to the provincial unions, viz., that it is very difficult to summarise them.

62. The metropolis, you said, comprises 30 unions, and you have replies from 25?—Yes.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

63. Are there not five sub-divisions?—Yes.

Mr. *Logan.*

64. May I ask you whether you have any return there of agricultural unions?—Not of the same character; but after the Committee was appointed, a communication was addressed to each of the Board's inspectors, asking them to furnish a report giving such information as they could supply at once, as to their districts, and we received reports from all the provincial districts (13), covering the country generally, and giving such information, but of a general character necessarily from the short time allowed for obtaining reports as regards the whole country.

65. That is a supplementary circular to the one of the 24th of January?—A circular addressed to our own inspectors the day the Committee was agreed to.

Mr. *Logan*—continued.

66. Have you any of the answers with you to-day?—Yes.

67. After we have dealt with the metropolitan unions we might have two or three of those reports read to us, might we not?—Yes.

Mr. *Jackson.*

68. Do you propose to put them in?—That is as the Committee desire.

Mr. *David Randell.*

69. May I ask one question. Have you asked for a return from any of the quarrying districts of North Wales?—No.

Chairman.

70. We had better confine ourselves to the metropolitan unions at present. Would you take them alphabetically, or would you prefer to take the largest unions first?—I will do whichever the Committee think best.

Mr. *Jackson.*

71. Have you got them alphabetically?—Yes.

Chairman.

72. Very well, take them alphabetically?—*Bethnal Green:* The clerk merely reports that the question has been referred to a committee.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

73. What date is that?—The letter was received on the 14th February.

Chairman.

74. He makes no return?—What he says is: "The first-mentioned circular" (that is the circular of the 24th of January), "was referred by the board for the consideration of the unemployed committee. That committee met on the 5th instant, and instructed me to prepare a statistical return on the subject; but through pressure of work, and the fact that at the present time this office is understaffed, I cannot hope to complete that return in time to call a meeting of the said committee this week," and he says, "In fact the office staff, including myself, have been working since the 1st January on an average of about 11 hours a day, including Sundays."

Chairman.

75. What is the next?—*Camberwell;* and this is received on the 9th of February: "The number of cases relieved of the able-bodied class during the past few weeks has increased to an enormous extent, as will be seen from the following figures:—

For the week ending 2nd February—

1891:	1892:	1893:	1894:	1895:
244	135	149	192	570

The total number of cases of all classes relieved during the corresponding week in previous years:—

1891:	1892:	1893:	1894:	1895:
3,455	3,063	3,350	3,785	7,627

76. Nearly

Mr. *Jackson.*

76. Nearly twice as many as last year?—There is a considerable increase since: "The guardians since the beginning of the severe weather have had great difficulty in meeting the distress with which they have to deal, but on consideration they did not find it either expedient or desirable to open the stone-yard, and instructed their relieving officers to deal with deserving urgent cases suffering privation from want of work, liberally, so far as the law allows. The vestry of the parish are engaging a large number of men to work one or two days per week, and lists of applicants are submitted to the relieving officers in order that the most deserving men with families may have the first opportunity of being engaged. The guardians contemplate some special arrangement at once, and have engaged a temporary relieving officer, and further intend considering the appointment of permanent additional relieving officers and the provision of relief stations, as the applications on the books are increasing to a very large extent every year, and some of the cases at present have to come a great distance to receive their allowance. From enquiries of pawnbrokers the guardians learn that the amount raised on articles placed in their hands in pledge is quite 75 per cent. more than last year, and they believe that the distress is of a distinctly exceptional character, and exists among general labourers and painters, and those engaged in the building trades; it is likely to continue whilst the severe weather lasts, and is now at its acutest stage. The guardians find many old people suffering who generally depend on the assistance of their children, mostly of the artizan classes, and it is only under severe pressure they will apply to the relieving officers. I should add that a special committee has been appointed to inquire into the question of relief to the unemployed, and the matter of the out-relief arrangements generally in the parish, and in conclusion I am to state that the guardians hope that the Local Government Board will now press upon the Government the necessity of taking some action in the direction of enabling them to relieve the deserving unemployed without prejudice to their rights as citizens and the degradation of pauperism."

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

77. Is there anything in the previous history of Camberwell to make it likely that the unemployed class were specially attracted there, the migratory unemployed?—There is no doubt it is a parish with a very large number of small houses, and a great many persons of the artizan class.

78. I mean this: Have there been in past years and on past occasions of distress any great distributions of relief which would be likely to attract them there?—No, I think not.

Mr. *John Burns.*

79. Is it frequent for the boards of guardians and the vestries to co-operate in the relief of distress as indicated by your Camberwell report?—In many cases that has been done.

80. And it has been definitely done in this case in Camberwell?—I cannot say how far it has been done in the present year.

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

81. Did not you say that the board of guardians handed over to the vestry surveyor (or that they wanted his opinion of) the worst cases of distress arising from the lack of employment for the vestry to give them work?—That has been done very generally in some parishes, no doubt, but I do not know that it has been done to a greater extent here than elsewhere.

82. Is that increasingly done every year?—I think it is.

Mr. *Mather.*

83. Do you know anything of the character of the occupation of the people in Camberwell — the prevailing character? — The majority of the able-bodied, our inspector tells us, applying for the relief are bricklayers, carpenters, painters and general labourers. The distress is locally regarded as temporary and exceptional, owing to the severe weather under which building and other outdoor operations are suspended.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

84. When was that?—It was so stated in a report made in the present month—I think about the 6th or 7th of February, after a visit by one of our inspectors.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

85. Before we leave Camberwell I should just like to ask whether, in the Local Government Board's experience, there is anything in the special conditions of Camberwell which accounts for its being, as you told us yesterday, before the public were admitted, one of the two markedly exceptional cases in the metropolis?—My own impression is that they have instructed, as they say, their relieving officers to give relief in all cases, as cases of sudden and urgent necessity. The amount given has not been large, but it has been given a little freely. That would be my impression; but I think the Committee are proposing to have a witness from Camberwell, and the facts can be more conveniently ascertained from him.

Chairman.

86. That would have the effect, of course, of attracting from other parts of the metropolis men in distress?—I very much doubt whether that is so. Camberwell is a parish which is occupied to a very large extent by persons of the working class, and every year finds it more so.

Mr. *Jackson.*

87. Did not you read some words to the effect that they had to come a long way for the receipt of their relief; was there not something of that kind in the letter?—It is an extensive parish, but it is one single parish; it is not a union.

Mr. *John Burns.*

88. It is a long straggling parish, is it not?—Yes. Up to this time they had not opened a stone-yard, and were relieving without any labour test.

89. Are there any reasons alleged in that communication for not opening a stone-yard?—They preferred trying the other course, I think.

Chairman.

90. What is your next letter?—*Chelsea.* The letter is dated the 4th February. At a meeting of the guardians "on the 30th ultimo it was resolved that a copy of the relieving officers' reports upon their several districts be forwarded to your Board, and that your Board be informed that in the opinion of the guardians there is no exceptional distress, and that the relief committees will be able to deal with the cases which come before them; and with regard to the condition of the classes of workpeople, that owing to the depression in trade, more particularly in the building trade, there is a slight increase of distress among the able-bodied above the pauper class." Then there are letters from relieving officers: "Not only has there been no abnormal number of applications for relief in this district of Chelsea, but rather a slight decrease than otherwise as compared with the corresponding weeks of the past two or three years. I am unaware of any cases of exceptional distress in the district with which I am entrusted, nor do I consider any special arrangements necessary at the present time to meet the destitution which comes under my notice. I am unable to afford the Board any information as to 'distress of an exceptional character amongst persons of the working class who have *not* applied for relief,' as the guardians will be aware that such cases are usefully and well dealt with in Chelsea by the voluntary societies of the parish." Then another relieving officer says: "The number of persons applying for relief in my district have practically remained stationery during the past two or three years, and I am unaware of any exceptional distress existing in this district considering the time of the year." A third says: "There has been no material increase in the applications for relief in my district during the past few months. You will see by the returns that there appears to be a slight decrease in this district as compared with 12 months ago. With regard to distress amongst persons of the working class who have not applied, I am sorry to say that I cannot offer any information." A fourth says: "There has been a small increase in the number of applications for relief during the recent winter months, and comparing the numbers with the corresponding weeks in the previous two or three years, there is an increase, but up till now no difficulty has occurred in meeting the distress of this district. During the winter months there is more distress among the working classes, namely, painters, bricklayers, and labourers, but greater part of the increase of relief is amongst the old and infirm people."

Fulham Union (this is dated the 4th February). The guardians "have obtained from each of the relieving officers in the union a report respecting the present condition of his district, and after a careful consideration of the matter, and conference thereon with the relieving officers, they are of opinion that the distress amongst the poor of this district is not more than usual at this season of the year. The workhouse, which has lately been enlarged to accommodate a total of 727, is certainly overfull, the present number of inmates being 785; but this is accounted for to a great extent by the

Chairman—continued.

want of action on the part of the managers of the West London School District in providing proper school accommodation, the result being that a large number of children are relieved in the workhouse instead of being transferred to the school, a matter which has been fully dealt with in a letter addressed to the President of the Local Government Board on the 4th of January, 1895. With regard to the applications for outdoor relief, no undue pressure has been made by offering the workhouse, and, notwithstanding the rapidly increasing population of the union, the number of cases appearing in the out-relief lists from the ninth week of last quarter to the third week of the present quarter is lower in almost every week than in the corresponding weeks of the previous year, and the total out-relief given during the same period of eight weeks amounts to 650*l.* 17*s.* 6½*d.* as compared with 652*l.* 0*s.* 3*d.* in the same weeks of 1893 and 1894. The guardians do not anticipate any difficulty in dealing with the cases of destitution arising in this union, nor that it will be likely to make any exceptional arrangements to enable them to do so. So far the applications from able-bodied persons have been few, and there has been no need to provide a labour test for that class by opening the outdoor labour yard, nor do the guardians think it will be necessary to do so unless there is a long continuance of the present severe weather. With regard to persons of the working class who have not applied for relief, there is no doubt that large numbers are suspended from work owing to slackness in trade and the severity of the weather, but not more so than in winter months of previous years. The classes chiefly affected in this respect appear to be masons, painters, painters' labourers, general labourers, and workers in laundries; but with these the want of employment does not appear to be in excess of that experienced in previous years, and it is hoped will cease to exist as the weather becomes more favourable for work."

St. George-in-the-East (this is dated the 6th February). "The numbers compare most favourably with those of other years. There has not been in this parish any strain whatever, and the guardians do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they may have to deal, nor do they contemplate any exceptional arrangements will be necessary to be made, and that up to the present time the only slight increase has been in outdoor medical orders, which has been caused by the Jewish authorities withdrawing their medical officers attending on outdoor cases. I am also directed to point out the guardians for some years past have virtually stopped outdoor relief."

St. Giles-in-the-Fields and St. George, Bloomsbury.—"During the recent winter months there does not appear to be any great increase in the number of applications for relief, but a larger percentage of such applications have been on account of sickness than for some years past. The number of applications as compared with those in the corresponding weeks in the previous three years, is as follows: year 1891–92, 554; year 1892–93, 503; year 1893-94, 421; year 1894–95,

Chairman—continued.

1894–95, 521. The guardians do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal, nor do they contem plate that any exceptional arrangement will be necessary to enable them to do so satisfactorily. They are not aware of any exceptional distress amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief."

Greenwich (this is dated the 15th February). "Prior to the date of your letter, very little increase in the number of applications for relief had occurred during the recent winter months. Owing, however, to the severity of the weather, the applications immediately afterwards became much more numerous, consisting almost entirely of able-bodied men out of employment (with their families) so that the total number relieved during the week ended 2nd February was 3,535 as compared with 1,391 in the corresponding week of the previous year. There are, at the present time, the number of about 700 men working in the labour yard. The distress is mainly caused by the stoppage of work through the frost, and the guardians have reason to believe that there are other persons who have not applied for relief connected with the building, market garden, shipping and waterside employments, amongst whom distress is also occasioned by the same cause."

Hackney.—The guardians enclose a letter signed by the relieving officers. This is dated the 4th of February: "We beg to state that when we take into consideration the change in class of inhabitants, and increase of population, we do not consider there is any material increase in the number of applications for relief as compared with late years, and that the work already provided by the vestry, and the labour yard opened by the guardians, will meet the destitution satisfactorily. We further beg to state we do not know of any exceptional distress amongst those who have not applied for relief, although in some districts those employed in the boot trade appear to have been short of work, but the boot trade is now steadily improving." That is signed by nine of the relieving officers.

Hampstead.—This letter is dated the 14th of February. So far as the guardians' "experience extends during the present winter months, there has not been any material increase in the number of applications for relief, as compared with previous years, and the guardians are not anticipating any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal. The vestry of this parish are co-operating with the guardians in finding work for, and paying able-bodied applicants for relief recommended to them by the guardians through their relieving officer, and they have at present no reason to consider that there is distress of an exceptional character amongst persons of the working class in this parish."

Holborn.—The Holborn guardians merely send a return of the relieving officer's reports on the matter. The letter is dated the 14th February. "St. Lukes, Eastern district: No material increase"; "Northern: Slight increase arising from sickness and want of work"; "Western: No material increase until last month (January), when several old applicants applied for relief"; "Clerkenwell, Southern: No

Chairman—continued.

increase"; "Northern: No material increase"; "Central: No material increase"; "Holborn, Western: No increase compared with last year, and much less than the two previous years. Sickness in this district has never been less than now"; "Eastern: No increase"; Islington (this is dated the 2nd February): "In this parish, as a whole, there has not been any material increase in the number of applications for relief, and the guardians do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal, nor at present contemplate that any exceptional arrangements will be necessary. There appears to be no distress, in this parish, of an exceptional character amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief."

91. May I ask with regard to these two—Holborn and Islington—are they large parishes?—Holborn includes the district of the Holborn Board of Works, and in addition the parishes of Clerkenwell and St. Luke's, Middlesex,—the parish in the neighbourhood of Old Street and the old City Road. Islington is a very extensive parish, and has, almost, a larger population than any other parish in London. At the census it had a population of 319,000.

92. What sort of population,—do you know?—By this time the parish is, I think, nearly covered with houses; and there are districts in the parish where the houses were originally erected for occupation by one family, where you find, now, a family in almost every room. There is a very large working population in Islington.

93. Then the next?—*Kensington:* "The guardians have obtained a return of the numbers of applications for relief (exclusive of those for medical relief only) received during the three months ending 31st January, 1895, 1894, and 1893. These numbers are:—For three months ended 31st January, 1895, 2,431; 1894, 2,261; 1893, 1,967. The result of the increase in the number of applications for relief has resulted in the numbers in the workhouse and infirmary on the 1st February last being 1,699 as against 1,492 at the corresponding date in 1894, and 1,401 in 1893, but this increase has been met by the recent enlargement of those buildings, and the guardians do not contemplate that any exceptional arrangements will be necessary to enable them to deal satisfactorily with the destitution with which they have to deal. The guardians can, as a board, only speak of the distress which comes before them officially in the form of applications for relief, but when the letter was under consideration several individual guardians stated that in their experience there is a considerable amount of distress at the present time amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief."

Lambeth (the letter is dated the 14th February): "The number of applications for relief have increased in Lambeth from September up to the present time, and the increase has been materially larger than is usual during the winter. Applications have been more numerous this winter than they were at the corresponding period of other recent years.

Chairman—continued.

The guardians do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal, and do not think any exceptional arrangements will be necessary to enable them to do so satisfactorily. As regards the existence of exceptional distress among those who have not applied for relief, it is very difficult to form a judgment, and there is doubtless much exaggeration in most of the statements put forth on the subject. On the whole the guardians think there is more (though not very much more) distress than is usual among those who do not habitually apply and have not during the winter applied for relief. The persons chiefly affected are artisans and labourers connected with the building trades, waterside labourers, and general labourers."

Lewisham : "During the recent winter months, and at the present time, there is a material increase in the number of applications for out relief. For the week which ended the 9th February, as compared with the corresponding week of last year, there was an increase of 722 persons in receipt of relief. (The number of inmates for the same period has also increased from 587 to 698.) The guardians have for the most part met the increased destitution by providing work in the labour yard for men who have been thrown out of employment on account of the winter weather, viz., labourers, bricklayers, painters, &c. The guardians do not anticipate a continuance of the present distress."

Marylebone (this is dated the 7th February): "The returns furnished by the relieving officers show that the applications for relief during the six weeks to the 26th ult. give an increase of about 5 per cent. as compared with the corresponding period of last year; and the guardians do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they may have to deal, nor do they contemplate that exceptional arrangements will be necessary in order to do so satisfactorily. As regards distress of an exceptional character amongst persons of the working class, who have not applied for relief, I am desired to forward the following minute: 'In respect to distress of an exceptional character among persons of the working classes who have not applied for relief, the committee have no official means of ascertaining its existence except that one of the relieving officers reports that in his district tailors and tailoresses are in a very distressed state, which he considers likely to continue, as their work is gradually drifting to the East End.'"

Mile End Old Town (this letter is dated the 7th February): "I enclose analysis of the cases which appeared before the guardians at their meeting this day and the like information at the corresponding period of last year. I fear, however, that these statistics give but a faint idea of the privation and misery which is being experienced at the present time, and which private and organised philanthropy is doing much to mitigate. Judging from the numbers who apply to our local vestry for employment when a fall of snow takes place (which has happened on several days during the last three weeks) I should say that there must be a very large number of men out of employment; of

Chairman—continued.

course there are in London hundreds of men who are always out of work, but just now, owing to the inclemency of the weather, the number is very much larger." The statement gives the "number of cases on the relieving officers' books," and the comparison is as follows: "Total number of cases, 194." "Total number in the corresponding week in the last year, 183." Then there is a printed report of a committee adopted on the 31st of January with reference to "work for the unemployed. Resolved, That report be made to the guardians that this committee"——

Mr. *Jackson.*

94. What is that committee?—A committee of the guardians of the Hamlet of Mile End Old Town.

95. Appointed by the Board?—It was a committee of the whole Board, and the report has been subsequently adopted by the guardians: —"Resolved, That report be made to the guardians that this committee have considered the various references to them on the question of relief to the able-bodied adult poor, and are of opinion that with regard to many of this class, who frequently appear before boards of guardians as applicants for relief, the provision made by the Poor Laws is—with proper workhouse classification—sufficient to meet such cases, but that with regard to most—and these are increasing in number—there appears to be something wanting which the Poor Law is unable to, and indeed seems unsuited to meet, and that provision other than of this semi-penal character is wanted to meet the needs and exigencies of the situation. To the minds of the committee, the expression 'unemployed' has for some time past been used to cover all the wreckage and residuum of society, to the great injury and wrong of the genuine working man, of whom there are many at all times in want of employment, but, of course, an increased number during the winter months. For these, and for their wives and children, the committee feel the greatest possible sympathy and concern; but, as this quality will not satisfy the bodily needs and natural aspirations of these unfortunate persons, and as it is, above all things, desirable that they should not become associated with the workhouse, or, indeed, with the Poor Law machinery at all, as a relief agency, the committee have set themselves to consider what practical and useful means might be provided to meet the needs and wants of such cases, and are of opinion that any scheme short of a national endeavour will not succeed in meeting the necessities of the case, as the question is too far-reaching to be successfully and permanently met by the provision of local arrangements, whether of parochial, district, or county areas. The committee are, however, not unmindful of past and present efforts of really good and useful men to find a means of overcoming the difficulties surrounding this pressing industrial question, and if their success has been but of a limited extent it may be regarded as the pioneer of a larger development, and insomuch deserves the cordial approval of all those who have the well-being of the community at heart. Having however stated their opinion that the question is

one

Mr. *Jackson*—continued.

one of national importance, the Committee are further of opinion that the exigencies thereof justify an appeal being made for an interview with the highest representative of the Government, and they therefore recommend that the Prime Minister be asked to receive a deputation from the guardians so that their views of the misery of the people, and attendant dangers of the situation may be pointed out to him, and a possible remedy submitted for his consideration and that of the Government." Then there is a note to that by the clerk. "This may not now be necessary having regard to what has taken place in the House of Commons this week."

96. Do they suggest a remedy; is there anything about a remedy?—They go on and say: "It was also resolved that report be made to the guardians, that with the view of meeting the immediate necessities of some of those who are now out of work through slackness in the various trades in which they are ordinarily employed, it is, in the opinion of this Committee, desirable that as much work as possible in whitewashing, painting, cleaning, and repairs, be put in hand at once, so that as the spring advances and the various trades are in some measure again active, the work which the guardians would then have to do may have been all completed." No, there is no reference to the particular scheme they have in their mind.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

97. Do you know whether the deputation has waited upon the Prime Minister?—No.

Mr. *Logan.*

98. May I ask you, do they not in that circular say that they are prepared to suggest to this high Government official they think of interviewing, something in the shape of a remedy; did not I understand that?—Yes; they "recommend that the Prime Minister be asked to receive a deputation from the guardians so that their views of the misery of the people, and attendant dangers of the situation may be pointed out to him, and a possible remedy submitted for his consideration and that of the Government."

99. That is, they would suggest "a possible remedy"?—Yes.

Chairman.

100. What is the next, please?—*St. Olave's.* The letter in this case is dated the 1st February, but the circumstances have changed since then, and there is a very much larger increase in St. Olave's than in any other union in London. The guardians merely send a report received from their relieving officers, as to "whether there has been during the recent winter months any material increase in the number of applications for relief." Two say, "No," and four say, "Yes." "How the number of such applications compare with those in the corresponding weeks in the previous two or three years"—"About the same," one says; "No material difference in the number of applications," another; "About five per cent., independent of stone-yard men," a third; and the remaining three say, "On the increase." "Whether any difficulty is anticipated in meeting the destitution"; the first says, "No"; the second, "No, so far as regards the ordinary type of cases"; and the remainder say, "No." Whether any exceptional arrangements are contemplated, they all say, "No." "Whether you consider that there is distress of an exceptional character"; one says, "No"; the second, "No, with the exception of applications for work in the stone-yard"; and the third, "No." Then the answers to the others are bracketed with the subsequent question—the "views as to the extent of such distress, the classes and occupations of the workpeople amongst whom the distress is most marked, and the probability of its continuance." One says, "Sack and waterside work about the same"; another, "The stone-yard not having been opened for about five years, I am unable to gauge extent of any distress arising from want of work, but the applications are most numerous from general waterside labourers, carmen, and labourers in leather trade, and, with one or two exceptions, are entirely of the lowest class"; another says, "No; the distress existing appears to be chiefly among the waterside and dock labourers, &c., and will probably continue for some months"; another, "No; the distress existing appears to be amongst the waterside and dock labourers, and will probably continue so until next May"; and another gives the same answer. "To what extent it is considered that such distress is in excess of, or less than, that in the corresponding period of other recent years?" One says, "Condemned houses may have affected this district to some extent"; another, "The amount of relief given in No. 4 district is exceptionally greater than in any period previously for some years, and is greatly on the increase"; another, "The amount of relief in kind given in my district last week was more than that of last year—is treble"; then another relieving officer says, "The amount of out-relief given in kind in my district during last week was more than that of last year—treble."

Mr. *Logan.*

101. They say there that condemned houses are a cause of distress; I do not quite understand, and I should like to know what he means by "condemned houses"?—I am afraid I cannot say; I do not quite see the connexion.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

102. Is it not that particular houses are closed by Her Majesty's orders?—I do not see how that should cause the distress.

Chairman.

103. But that report, you told us, is dated the 1st February, and the state of things, you say, has considerably altered for the worse since then?—Very much for the worse.

Mr. *Jackson.*

104. That is owing to the frozen river, is it not?—And they have opened a stone-yard with very marked results.

Mr. *Bartley.*

105. Is the result an increase or a decrease?—An enormously high increase.

Mr. *John Burns.*

106. What are the results?—An enormous increase.

107. In St. Olave's?—Yes.

Chairman.

108. Do you mean that the stone-yard is conducted on such terms as rather to increase the number of those relieved?—What I should say, generally, is this: A resolution was passed by the guardians that the stone-yard be opened, and that relief should be given at the rate of sixpence per hour per day.

Mr. *Jackson.*

109. Sixpence per hour?—Sixpence per hour per day, with the result that in the first two days they had 650 applications, with 650 persons working in the yard.

Mr. *Renshaw.*

110. What date was that opened?—I think it was on the 7th or 8th January. The report that I read was dated the 1st February. I am now referring to a report of the clerk to the guardians, dated the 9th January.

Mr. *Jackson.*

111. That is previous?—The letter that I read previously was dated the 1st February; then the report to the guardians by the clerk on the 9th January.

Mr. *John Burns.*

112. It was on the 9th January that the stone-yard was opened, was it not?—Yes. The reports of the relieving officers must, I think, have been made at a much earlier date than the 7th February.

113. You mean the occasion on which the 3,000 applicants waited at the stone-yard, do not you, the 9th January?—Yes, that letter was dated the 1st February, but the condition of things, according to a report of the 9th January, was this: In accordance with the instructions of the guardians, received at their last meeting, the yard was opened on Monday the 7th instant. The yard was also opened on Tuesday the 8th instant. On these days orders were issued by the relieving officers, on the two days, number 673. As far as I understand, the resolution that was passed by the guardians was to allow relief of the value of 3*s.* 6*d.* per day, partly in money and partly in kind, and without reference to the necessities of the case, but giving to all who were supposed to be at work in the stone-yard that amount.

Mr. *Jackson.*

114. "Supposed to be at work"?—I was not intending to refer to that, but there is another report where complaint is made that some of the men disappeared at 11 o'clock by going through a culvert and climbing over some hedges, and turned up at five o'clock for the pay.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

115. Was any trouble taken to ascertain whether the applicants lived in the district?—That was one of their difficulties. It was not long before they found it necessary to pass a resolution that they would not relieve anyone who was living in a common lodging-house or who had not lived for six months in the parish, because the almost immediate result of this somewhat liberal arrangement was that people were drifting into the parish; and it is not difficult, of course, to get lodgings in a common lodging-house.

Mr. *John Burns.*

116. Is it not a fact, to be corrected by later information, that when this parish opened the stone-yard, they advertised, not only in the local, but in the metropolitan papers, that they put no disqualification on outsiders outside the parish; and that, as they paid the current rate of wage, people flocked to it from all parts of the metropolis?—I am afraid that was so. I do not know that they actually advertised, but of course the proceedings of the guardians at their meeting were published in "London" and certain other papers, and it became very soon general information.

117. Is it not a fact also, that, when this state of things brought about a dead-lock in consequence of the number of outsiders, they adopted another method, and excluded outsiders and men in the common lodging-houses?—Yes.

118. Was the stone-yard then closed up?—No, it is going on still.

119. It is still going on?—Yes.

120. And is it confined to local men at the 6*d.* per hour?—I expect so. When I say 6*d.* per hour, it is not paid in money; half is given in money and half is given in kind.

121. Still, it is the equivalent of 6*d.* a hour?—When the board became aware of the arrangement that was contemplated, it was pointed out to the guardians how inexpedient it was to be giving to these men, whatever their circumstances were, the same rate of wage or relief; and then they altered their arrangements; they determined to take a man on, if he had two children, perhaps for a couple of days; and according to the number of members of the family, so the number of days' relief in the stone-yard was given.

122. But the 6*d.*, or its equivalent of food, is still paid?—I believe so.

123. Do not you know of other districts in London where 6*d.* per hour has been paid this winter for relief works, and no such rush or inconvenience has been caused as at St. Olave's;—This is not "relief works"; this is relief given by the guardians.

124. Through the stone-yard?—For stone-breaking as a test of destitution.

Mr. *Jackson.*

125. When you speak of "a test of destitution," does that mean that a certain quantity has to be done per hour?—There is a prescribed quantity, but the task is not rigorously enforced; it depends upon the ability of the man, because very often the more respectable the man, the more

Mr. *Jackson*—continued.

more difficulty he might have in getting through the task of stone-breaking.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

126. Do you know what difference was made by the alteration, when they ceased to employ all men, and confined it to the residents?—I am afraid I cannot easily lay my hands upon the figures, but the number has continued to grow largely.

Chairman.

127. There is some little discrepancy in the dates you have quoted, I think, because the state of things indicated by what we have heard of the stone-breaking yard is hardly consistent with the report of the vestry on the 1st February, is it?—I quite feel that.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

128. Do you know if these payments were made under a duly authorised pay-ticket?—Yes; I have no doubt that was so. *Paddington* is the next (this is dated the 8th February): "There has been no material increase in recent applications for relief, and the numbers do not greatly differ from those of last year, though one relieving officer reports a material increase in the last two years over those of previous years. No difficulty has been experienced in recent years in dealing with the destitute able-bodied men, unless undeserving, in which case they have been offered the house with out-relief for their wives, if deserving, and for their children, they have been given work in the wood shed, and such work has, when necessary, been renewed for a period not exceeding eight weeks from week to week, upon the labour master reporting that they had done an honest day's work. The guardians have also from time to time given orders that if it were necessary to make room for these men, some of the usual inmate workers should be withdrawn from the wood shed. No occasion has, however, yet arisen for such withdrawal. One relieving officer reports exceptional distress amongst persons who do not apply for relief, but the guardians have not otherwise been made acquainted with similar information. They, however, beg again, in connection with their letter of the 28th November 1894, to emphasize the necessity of an official inquiry into the various experiments that have been carried out in recent years, and are still being carried out for the assistance of the able-bodied unemployed. A reference to the columns of the 'Local Government Journal' and of 'London' during the last 10 or 12 weeks will show how acutely the question is being discussed in various districts in London, and how great is the need of some authoritative guide in the conduct of the various experiments that may be carried out in the future." *St. Pancras* (this is dated the 9th February): "The ordinary applications for relief have not, up to this date, shewn any material increase as compared with the corresponding periods of previous years, but the extraordinary applications for help on the part of the 'unemployed' are causing much difficulty, as indicated in my letters of the 7th and 8th instant respectively. With reference to the second paragraph, I am directed to add to the information contained in my last two letters that at the meeting of the board held on the 7th instant, the guardians had under consideration communications from several other boards with reference to the question as to what steps should be taken to provide labour for the 'unemployed' of London, and it was resolved unanimously 'That the guardians of this parish unite with other metropolitan boards of guardians in their petitions, urging the Government to take steps to deal with the 'unemployed' question."

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

Mr. *John Burns.*

129. Are there any suggestions there?—No.

130. But simply a request for a deputation?—And that they "unite with other metropolitan boards of guardians." There is a reference to another letter. I have no recollection of that being a letter of importance, but I will refer to it (I have not it here), and take care that it is added if it has any material bearing on the question. *Poplar* (this is dated the 15th February): "The first letter has been referred by the guardians to a committee of their body for consideration, but whose report has not yet been received. In the meantime the guardians desire me to state that the applications for relief have been less in number than in previous years. There can, however, be no doubt that in consequence of the continued severity of the weather unusual distress prevails in this district, and will increase until milder weather sets in. Hundreds of men who usually find employment in the docks or wharves are unable to follow their occupation, and the position is made more difficult by the absolute stoppage of all outdoor work." *Shoreditch* (this is dated the 1st February), "From a return which the guardians have had submitted to them, a copy of which is enclosed, they find that the number of applications for relief during the recent months is less than that during the corresponding period of the previous three years. They are not anticipating any exceptional difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal, and do not contemplate any exceptional arrangements. The guardians cannot conceal from themselves the fact that there is distress amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief, but they are of opinion that the distress is not exceptional."

Chairman.

131. That that distress is not exceptional?—Yes, "that the distress," that is the "distress amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief" is not exceptional, admitting the distress.

Mr. *Bartley.*

132. That includes Hoxton, does not it?—Yes; *Stepney* is the next: The guardians have called upon their relieving officers to furnish them with information upon the points referred to" in the circular. "With reference to the number of applications for relief made to the officers during the present winter months as compared with similar

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

similar applications made during the corresponding period in the three previous years, the guardians have been furnished with the following statement, showing the number of applications during the months of November, December, and January in the under-mentioned years :—

November, December and January.	No. 1 District.	No. 2 District.	Total.
1891–2	716	637	1,353
1892–3	680	706	1,386
1893–4	892	1,032	1,924
1894–5	749	1,015	1,764

Mr. *Jackson.*

133. That is rather less than the previous year?—Yes; 1,924 the previous year and 1,764 last year. There was, however, an increase of about 400 between 1892 and 1894. "With reference to the apparently large excess in the number of applications in the No. 2 District during the last two years, the guardians are informed by the relieving officer that such increase has been mainly owing to 'the influx of tramps taking up their abode at the Free Shelter, Medland Hall,' situate in his district, which attracts persons of the homeless class thereto, whence they gravitate to the workhouse. The guardians are informed that there is undoubtedly a considerable amount of distress existing at the present time, which is variously stated to be owing to depression of trade and slackness of work (attributed by some to the constantly recurring strikes) and the inclemency of the weather. How far these causes may yet render necessary some exceptional arrangements for meeting destitution the guardians are unable to forecast. The guardians are also informed by their relieving officers that, as the result of their enquiries, they find there is much distress among the working classes who have not applied for relief, but that they are unable to particularise the classes and occupations of the workpeople among whom the distress is most marked, or to give any reliable opinion as to its probable continuance. As cognate to this subject, I beg leave to state that the guardians have recently taken into consideration the question of the best means of dealing with the unemployed, and that at their meeting on Thursday last they passed a resolution upon the subject, the substance of which I had the honour of transmitting to the Local Government Board on the 9th instant."

Mr. *Lawrence.*

134. What is the hall mentioned there; what was the reference that you said was the cause of the tramps going there?—Medland Hall; it is one of those voluntary shelters established originally, I believe, by the Congregational Union, where persons are given lodging free of any charge; and, I think, they get a little food as well. It is kept open late. The men have facilities for going out early in the morning to search for work wherever it is to be got. The accommodation is not at all of a kind to induce people to go there unless they are destitute.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

135. What is the date of that?—Stepney, the 13th February.—*Strand* (dated the 4th February): "There has been no material increase in the number of applications for relief as compared with the previous two or three years, nor do the guardians anticipate any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal, and consequently no exceptional arrangements are in contemplation. I may, however, add that the larger number of applicants for relief in the Strand Union are people who have no settled home, but who are attracted by various reasons to this part of London, and who, on becoming sick or destitute, apply for admission to the workhouse. This class has been steadily increasing since the year 1887, and still shows a tendency to become more numerous."

Wandsworth and Clapham.—The guardians sent reports received from the relieving officers, and enclose a return for the week ending the 6th February, and they add: "In the opinion of the guardians the only way to obtain, satisfactorily, the information asked for by the Local Government Board is to take a census of the persons out of employment."

Mr. *John Burns.*

136. Is there any other information there?—Yes, I have got the reports of the relieving officers; one is dated the 11th February. I think he takes part of Battersea parish: "So far as I have been able to observe, there was no material increase in the number of ordinary applications for relief during the 12 weeks I held office up to 26th December last. On the contrary, there was, up to that date, a steady tendency to decrease, and I think it will be found, on reference to my receipt and expenditure book, that the amount given in outdoor relief in this district was about 2*l.* per week less in December last than when I took office in July. But since the stone-yard was opened (in December), I have received a considerable number of applications from able-bodied men out of work (chiefly painters), and these have occasioned an appreciable increase in the outdoor relief from week to week during the past eight weeks. The total number engaged in the stone-yard from this district on Saturday last (9th) was 28."

Mr. *Jackson.*

137. Is that 6*d.* an hour without supervision?—I do not know; I do not think it is. I am afraid I have not the scale of relief in that part of London. Another relieving officer (he also, I think, acts for part of Battersea) says: "By reason of the recent division and increase of the districts of Battersea for purposes of relief, I am unable to make the comparisons desired. As to my own district, I do not think there is any exceptional distress as compared with the corresponding periods of recent years, other than that which is due to the frost of the past two weeks which is affecting the building trades. I am also of opinion there are a considerable number of persons in a condition of distress who have not applied for relief under the Poor Law administration." Another (acting for Battersea district) says:

Mr. *Jackson*—continued.

says: "The recent re-arrangement of the parish of Battersea into five districts renders it impossible for me to furnish any figures for the previous years, and I presume that the parish of Battersea must be treated as a unit, and such figures as may be required obtained from the weekly printed lists in your office. I am distinctly of opinion that the distress of the present time is greater than during any part of the years 1892, 3 or 4; and that such increase is the result chiefly of:—(*a*) The greater severity of the weather this winter compared with the two preceding ones, and the very unfavourable summer of 1894 for most branches of the building trades, especially painting, &c. (*b*) The very large number of poor persons who have recently removed into Battersea consequent upon the pulling down of small houses comprising large districts of Chelsea. The distress appears to affect most acutely all branches of building trades and general labourers who are largely attached to or dependent upon building operations. The stoppage of the river steamboat traffic early in the autumn and great losses in the cab trade have left many men without employment whose calling is not likely to revive until the winter has well passed. Writing of the whole of the industrial portion of Battersea—with an experience extending back many years, during most of which I had special opportunities of noting the periods of depression, I consider the distress of the present winter is so far scarcely equal (allowing for the increasd population) to any of the bad years such as 1869, 1878, 1880-81 and 1885, in which years severe frost commenced early in the winter, and food of all kinds, and coal, were much dearer, but rent cheaper than now. I am aware that there are now a very large number of families suffering great privations, hoping to hold out until an improvement comes, selling home and clothing to keep clear of becoming paupers. Many of such families, of whom I have a personal knowledge, are, in my opinion, for the time, poorer than some who receive relief, and I think that those not seeking relief, although in distress, are proportionately more numerous than previously. But the families who are now suffering most acutely are those who depend upon woman's work for support. Widows and other women having children dependent upon them rarely earn more than enough for the bare necessities, leaving no chance of saving for bad times, and a severe winter not only curtails the amount of work, but brings the wives of the unemployed men into cruel rivalry with them." Another Battersea relieving officer says he is unable to give particulars or a comparative statement, in consequence of the change of districts, but he says: "Occupations mostly affected in my district during the winter appear to be painters, labourers, and river-boat employés." Another: "During the recent winter months there has been, within my district, a material increase in the number of applications for relief, the majority of such applications being for medical relief, nourishments for the sick, and for out-relief with work. I am unable to say how the number of such applications compare with those in the corresponding weeks in the previous two or three years." Another (this is a relieving officer in the Clapham district): "I have not found any material increase in the number of applications for relief, compared with those in the corresponding period of last year. Undoubtedly this severe weather has thrown a great many men out of their usual employment, such as carpenters, bricklayers, and labourers in the building trade, although this is not apparent in any increase of application, for relief." The Putney district relieving officer says: "There does not appear to me to be any more distress than during the severe weather last year, and the previons two or three years." The Tooting Graveney district officer sends a table of figures. Taking Streatham, the total amount expended in out relief from 11th October 1893, to 31st January 1894, was 432*l.* 10*s.* 8*d.*; from 10th October 1894, to 30th January 1895, 427*l.*

138. That is rather less, is it not?—That is rather less; 432*l.* and 427*l.*

Mr. *John Burns.*

139. And the stone-yard was open in the latter period, was it not?—This is up to 30th January; but Streatham is a good neighbourhood, I think. Tooting Graveney for the same periods, 94*l.* 15*s.* 5*d.* in 1894; and 97*l.* 7*s.* 5*d.* in 1895; and the officer adds: "I have no knowledge of any exceptional distress in my district." Another (for Wandsworth parish) says: "A considerable amount of distress is at present existing in many parts of this parish; chiefly among the builders' men and other outdoor workers. We have very few factories or extensive workshops in this district employing much labour. The chief employment is in the building trade, which has been completely suspended during the last five weeks owing to the severe frosty weather. I have reason to believe that as soon as the weather will permit several hundreds of workmen have employment to return to on the new buildings. Many cases of sickness and privation have come under my notice during the last few, five or six, weeks, but I am happy to say that I have not heard of one serious case of starvation in this district during the whole of this very severe winter."

Mr. *Jackson.*

140. May I ask you this; do you know at all whether the builders referred to there, in that district you have just read to us (apparently they are principally men engaged in the building trade), receive any assistance during the time they are out of work from their employers or from their societies?—I think if you would not mind asking Mr. Llewellyn Smith of the Labour Department, who I understand will be a witness, it would be more satisfactory; he is so much better able to give information as to that than I am. Westminster is the next.

Chairman.

141. May I ask, is Westminster the last of the London?—There are three more, Westminster, Whitechapel, and Woolwich; two are very short, and Whitechapel is rather important. *Westminster* (dated 4th February): "There is no increase in the number of applications for

Chairman—continued.

relief, and no apparent excess of distress over corresponding periods of recent years." *Whitechapel*: "Whilst the aggregate number of applications for relief during the winter months has been somewhat in excess of previous years, the increase would seem to have been mainly confined to the period of the recent frost, and largely to the sickness which is occasioned by severity of the weather. The actual numbers of entries in the 'application and report books' for the eight weeks up to the 12th instant, and in the corresponding eight weeks of 1892, 1893, and 1894 respectively were as follows:—1892, 1,497; 1893, 1,592; 1894, 1,394; 1895, 1,726. Included in the above are the following numbers of applications for relief by reason of alleged want of employment, viz.:—1892, 231 males; 1893, 322 males; 1894, 345 males; 1895, 412 males." (I have left out the number of females.) "The above statistical facts do not, in themselves, indicate the necessity for exceptional arrangements to meet the destitution with which the guardians have to deal. At the same time the guardians are not free from present anxiety in regard to the sufficiency of their infirmary and workhouse accommodation." As regards the able-bodied, it is stated that the cause of the increase "is probably two-fold: (1) the improved and consequently more attractive provision for the aged and infirm inmates of the workhouse, and (2) the increase of migratory poor filtering into the workhouse and infirmary from the numerous shelters, refuges, &c., within the district. On Saturday last there were 157 'adults able-bodied' in the workhouse, viz., 110 men and 47 women, as compared with 106 'adults able-bodied' in the workhouse on the corresponding day of last year, viz., 65 men and 41 women. It is to be observed, however, that no certain deduction can be made from these figures. In the first place, the 110 men relieved this year are men classed for diet as 'able-bodied.' They include many partially disabled, and some over 60 years of age; they include an increasing number of labourers of the casual class who are now practically excluded from the labour market by the very limited demand for casual workers at the docks resulting from the organisation of permanent labour which followed the late strike; they include men over 50 years of age who have no chance in the competition for casual work; and they include, as already stated, an increased number of migratory poor. As illustrating these facts, a recent Return by the master of the workhouse (for the purpose of assisting the guardians in the further consideration of the question of sending additional men to a farm for training) shows that of 108 men classed 'able-bodied' for diet, 46 only are scheduled as physically able to do outdoor work; and as the remaining 62 are probably largely in excess of the corresponding class last year, it is obviously difficult to conclude that the increase of 'able-bodied' men in the workhouse is the result of an exceptional scarcity of employment this year.

Chairman—continued.

It should, however, be stated that in this union there is a considerable depression in the tailoring trade, by reason, it is stated, of a large falling off, temporary it may be, of export orders. There can be no doubt that there is a great deal of distress among the very poor; and probably the classes who suffer most are those who are precluded by the severity of the weather from following their ordinary avocations, such as costermongers, street-hawkers, casual workers, &c. But the guardians hope that with the return of milder weather the poor will resume more hopeful conditions of life, and that these will bring a material reduction in both pauperism and distress." The last is *Woolwich*. This letter is dated the 7th of February: The guardians "after careful inquiry have no reason to suppose that there is any exceptional distress for the period of the year within the district of this union. The number of applications for out-door relief for able-bodied men has been quite normal up to now; if anything, somewhat below the last four years, except in one district, where the temporary closing of a ship-breaking yard threw some men out of work for some weeks. This has now been re-opened."

Mr. *Logan*.

142. These reports are read to us so that we may form our opinion as to the condition of the unemployed in the country. The guardians, in sending these reports, base their opinions very largely upon reports which they have got from the relieving officers, is not that so?—So far as the references to the number of persons relieved go, they would obtain the information from the relieving officers, no doubt; and to some extent I have no doubt they would base their conclusions as to the extent of distress amongst persons above the pauper class upon the information obtained from those officers.

143. I want to ask whether we are to take it from you as your opinion that the reports from relieving officers embody the views of those officers ascertained by (no doubt) an intimate knowledge of their districts in the discharge of their usual duties, but not in any way founded upon inquiry systematically made in reference to the alleged exceptional distress this winter?—I think it may be taken for granted that there has been no systematic inquiry by relieving officers.

Chairman.

144. No census?—No; but the relieving officers, from the very nature of their duties, are continually amongst the poor, and can form a very fair opinion of the extent of distress; and then the guardians themselves are, in many cases, employers of labour, and are able to form an opinion on the subject generally, although, of course, they would not be able to give actual figures.

Mr. *Logan*.

145. There has been no systematic inquiry?—No.

Wednesday, 20th February 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Acland.
Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. Billson.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. Bousfield.
Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.
Mr. Crean.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Mather.
Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. Round.
Mr. Whiteley.
Mr. John Wilson (Durham).
Mr. John Wilson (Govan).
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN IN THE CHAIR.

Sir HUGH OWEN, K.C.B., re-called; and further Examined.

Chairman.

146. I THINK when we adjourned yesterday, you had gone over the answers received from the metropolitan unions?—Yes. I may perhaps say that I have some further letters received from boards of guardians yesterday and to-day. Shall I read over the names.

147. Will you do so, and then any honourable Member who wishes to hear an individual report can ask for it?—Letters have been received from Newcastle-on-Tyne, Dudley, Birkenhead, Stoke-on-Trent, Gateshead, Lincoln, Prescot, (including St. Helen's and Widnes), Rochdale, Hereford, and Worcester.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

148. I should like to know what the letter from Newcastle-on-Tyne says?—The guardians forward "copies of the reports made by the relieving officers which were read at the meeting of the Board" on the 15th. "The guardians generally confirm the statements and opinions of their officers as to the present distress being of a temporary nature caused by the exceptionally severe weather, and the guardians do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting with the destitution with which they have to deal, as it appears to them that the existing distress will to a very large extent be removed as soon as the weather will permit outside work to be resumed."

149. What is the date of that letter?—The 16th of February—it was received on the 18th. There are somewhat long reports by the relieving officers.

Mr. *Mather.*

150. Is there anything in the other reports that you would like to call our attention to especially?—They vary very much, just in the same way as the reports which I read yesterday did.

151. They are of a similar character?—Yes.

Mr. *Renshaw.*

152. May we have the reply from Lincoln?—The reply from Lincoln I see is not one with regard to the extent of the distress, but it is similar to several other communications which have been addressed to the Board, earnestly entreating that steps should be taken for obtaining with the least possible delay a census of the persons out of employment in Great Britain, obtaining from Parliament the necessary powers and making provision for the collection of the most complete information compatible with the speedy execution of the work.

Mr. *John Burns.*

153. Can you assign any reason why it is that in answer to your circular letter you have only had answers from the Poor Law officers, and not from vestry clerks and others who have to deal immediately with those in want of employment. You have not a single reply from any Metropolitan vestry?—These letters were sent only to Boards of Guardians primarily with regard to the question as to how far there was distress with which they had to deal.

154. Have you received any letters on this matter from vestries at all?—We have not communicated with the vestries. We were approaching the question from the Poor Law point of view, in writing to the guardians.

155. Have you not approached it from the point of view of seeing what is being done by the vestries, or urging them to do anything?—Yes, a further letter was addressed to the vestries on the 11th of February.

Chairman.

156. You will tell us about that afterwards, no doubt?—Yes.

157. I gather

Mr. *Bousfield.*

157. I gather from the letter from Lincoln that they felt the necessity of some machinery for finding out the number of unemployed in their district?—Several boards of guardians have written in similar terms. I have other letters which I can read, if required.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

158. Can you tell us why West Ham has not made its appearance among these reports? Is it treated as metropolitan or provincial?—Provincial. We have not had an answer from West Ham.

159. It is still outstanding?—Yes.

160. Yesterday you read an answer from Sheffield to the effect that they were making inquiries. Is Sheffield still outstanding?—We have not had a communication from Sheffield or from West Ham, but we know something of the circumstances of West Ham because of the deputation to the President on Monday last.

Chairman.

161. Now, coming to the statistics of pauperism, and referring to the whole of England and Wales, will you state, generally, how the number of persons in receipt of relief in the month of December last compared with the number in December, 1893?—The first three weeks showed a decrease. In the last week the number was 732,000, being an increase of about 4,000 as compared with the corresponding week in December, 1893.

Mr. *Jackson.*

162. May I point out that 1893, with regard certainly to particular districts, was quite an exceptional year; there was an enormous coal strike. If you have got the figures for 1892 perhaps you would give them?—The number of persons in receipt of relief in the fourth week of December, 1892, was 693,000; in the same week in 1893 the number was 728,000; and in 1894 it was 732,000. Comparing 1893 with 1894 there was a decrease of ·1 per 1,000 of the population. Comparing 1894 with 1892 the figure was 24·4, as against 23·6 in 1892.

Chairman.

163. What was the case in December as regards the Metropolis?—In London there was a decrease in each week in the month, as compared with the same month in 1893. The number of persons in receipt of relief in the fourth week was 104,200, being a decrease of ·3 per 1,000 of the estimated population.

164. Can you carry that back to 1892?—In 1892 the number of persons in receipt of relief in the fourth week of December was 98.000, in 1893 it was 104,820, and in 1894 it was 104,242. The proportion of persons in receipt of relief to every 1,000 of the population was in 1892, 23; in 1893, 24·3; and in 1894, 24.

165. What is the case as regards the returns for the month of January for England and Wales?—The returns for England and Wales are not complete for a later date than the fourth week of January. The returns for each week show an increase as compared with the previous week, and an increase as compared with January, 1894. The number, when compared with the corresponding month of last year, had increased from 741,318 to 770,436. When this is compared with the population it gives an increase of ·7 per 1,000 of the population.

Chairman—continued.

166. Can you say how these returns compare with earlier years?—I have a table which gives the figures for each year from 1857. Whilst in January of the present year the number is 770,436, in each year from 1867 to 1871 the number exceeded one million. The rate per head of population was less in the week referred to than in any year since 1857, with the exception of the years from 1891 to 1894. Against the rate of 25·6 per 1,000 of the population in January of this year the rates in the earlier years (excluding 1891 to 1894) varied from 25·7 to 50 per 1,000 of the population. I exclude 1863, the cotton famine year, when it was 53 per 1,000. If pauperism in the fourth week of January last, in England and Wales, had been in the same proportion to population as in 1865 the number would have been 1,358,643 as against 770,436 last month; in 1875 967,000 as against 770,000 in January last; and in 1885 827,000 against 770,000.

167. You take those figures from the table I understand; have you given the contents of the table, or is it worth while to put it in?—This table gives details as to the estimated population, the number actually relieved by the guardians in each of the five weeks of January for the years 1857 to 1895 (with the exception of 1895, where I can only give the figure at present for the four weeks) with the number of paupers in every 1,000 inhabitants in the last week of the period.

168. Will you put that paper in?—Yes. (*The same was delivered in.*)

169. Will you state what rules regulate the calculation of the number of persons in receipt of relief? The numbers relieved include, do they not, the members of the family as well as the head of the family?—When an able-bodied man, being the head of a family, is granted relief in consequence of being sick, or temporarily disabled, or out of work, not only the man himself, but his wife and his children under 16, who are dependent upon him, are included in the returns. If the relief is given on account of the sickness of a wife, or child, or especially for a wife or child, the wife or child and the head of the family are included, but not the other children. Similar rules apply to women and children dependent upon them.

170. Turning to the Metropolis, what are the facts as to pauperism there according to the latest returns?—The returns for London are complete up to the first week of February. In each week of January except the first they show an increase as compared with January in the preceding year. The increase in the second week was 3,000; in the third, 6,000; in the fourth, 10,000; in the fifth, 18,000; and in the first week of February 27,000.

Mr. *Bousfield.*

171. I understand that it is the increase over the corresponding week in the preceding year?—Yes.

172. What

Chairman.

172. What was the total number relieved?—I will take each week. In the first week of January, 1895, in the metropolis, the number relieved was 106,000; in the second week 112,000; in the third week 114,000; in the fourth week 117,000; in the fifth week 125,000; and in the first week of February 134,000.

173. How does that figure of 134,000 compare with the corresponding week in the previous year; it exceeds the number, does it not?—The total number relieved in the first week of February, 1895, was 134,000, a larger number than in any corresponding week in any year since the five years 1867 to 1871, when the number ranged from 155,000 to 168,000. The rate per thousand of estimated population was 30·8 in the first week of February, 1895, which was less than in any year in the 18 years from 1857 to 1874, when the rate ranged from 32 per 1000 to 57 per 1000 in 1871. This table it might be desirable to put in.

174. Will you put it in?—(*The same was delivered in*).

175. In some previous years when there appeared to be exceptional distress the Local Government Board addressed circular letters to the sanitary authorities of the different districts throughout the country suggesting the provision of work for the unemployed when the circumstances of the district admitted of it. A similar circular was issued this year, was it not?—Yes; circulars such as those referred to were issued in 1886, 1887, and 1891 (for the metropolis only), and in 1892 and 1893. In the present year the question whether such a circular should be issued was considered from time to time, but there was not then any evidence of such exceptional distress as appeared to render it expedient to do so. It was felt that the very frequent issue of such a circular would have the result of diminishing its effect at a time when the intervention of the local authorities was urgently needed. As, however, the severe weather was continuing and there could be no doubt that distress was increasing amongst the classes who do not ordinarily apply for relief, it was determined again to issue a circular of this character, and it was issued on the 11th of the present month.

176. To what particular authorities was this circular issued?—To the town councils, to all the district councils of all urban districts other than boroughs, to all rural district councils, and to the vestries and district boards in the metropolis, and a copy of the letter was sent to each board of guardians.

177. Is that circular before the Committee?—No; the circular that is before the Committee is the one addressed to boards of guardians as to how far they were meeting with difficulty in the relief of the poor. This circular letter was to the vestries and district councils with regard to the question of affording employment.

178. Can you put in a copy of that circular also?—Yes.

179. Have many replies been received to that circular?—Not a considerable number; I daresay there are 40.

Chairman—continued.

180. What is the effect of them?—In many cases the authorities say they are providing work; in others they refer to subscriptions which are being collected and funds raised for affording aid to those who are out of work; and in some cases they say they are practically in great difficulty in consequence of the frost preventing their proceeding with such works as were suggested. I think perhaps it might be convenient if I read the circular letter. It is dated the 11th of February: "I am directed by the Local Government Board to state that, having regard to the scarcity of employment which now exists in many parts of the country, aggravated as it now is by the protracted frost, the Board deem it right to bring under the special attention of the district council means which may be adopted for providing, in times of exceptional distress, employment for the unemployed of a class who do not ordinarily have recourse to boards of guardians for relief. The Board feel assured that the district council will concur with them in their view as to the great importance of aiding artizans and others, who make great personal sacrifices in order to avoid the stigma of pauperism, to maintain their independence. This can best be secured by the local authorities proceeding with the execution of the works which, in the interest of the district as regards its sanitary condition or local improvement, or otherwise, it is desirable should be carried out, at the time when other employment is difficult to obtain. What is required in the endeavour to relieve artizans and others who have hitherto avoided poor law assistance, and who are temporarily deprived of employment, is:—(1) work which will not involve the stigma of pauperism; (2) work which all can perform, whatever may have been their previous avocations; (3) work which does not compete with that of other labourers at present in employment. These works may be of the following kinds, among others: cleansing of streets not usually undertaken by local authorities, laying out and paving of new streets, etc., paving of unpaved streets, and making of footpaths in country roads, spade husbandry on sewage farms, laying out of open spaces, recreation grounds, new cemeteries, or disused burial grounds, providing or extending sewage works and works of water supply. The Board strongly urge the District Council to take the matter into their immediate consideration with the view of seeing whether work of the kind suggested can be undertaken in their district at the present time. The District Council will, the Board feel sure, realise the importance of expediting works of other kinds which may have been determined upon by them. The Board recommend that there should be co-operation between District Councils and Boards of Guardians, and that arrangements should be made as far as practicable for the employment in connection with the works of those who are recommended by the guardians as persons who, owing to their previous condition and circumstances, it is desirable should not become subjects of Poor Law relief. When the works undertaken are of such a character that the expense may properly be defrayed out of borrowed moneys, the

Chairman—continued.

District Council may rely that there will be every desire on the part of the Board to deal promptly with the applications which may be made to them for their sanction to loans. The Board will be obliged by being informed from time to time of any means which may be adopted by the District Council of affording assistance to the unemployed, as suggested in this communication."

181. What can you say as to the effect of the answers which have been received to that letter; how can you best communicate some idea of their effect to the Committee?—Perhaps I might take a few in the order in which they have been received. These are not nearly so long as the other communications which were referred to yesterday. The first is the Fareham Urban District Council in Hampshire with a population of 7,934; the letter states that "Arrangements had been made by the district council to proceed with certain works of road making and the construction of a new footpath during the winter months with a view to the giving of work to the unemployed. It is much regretted that the severe frost has entirely put a stop to these works, or indeed to almost all kinds of work in the district." The next is from Wavertree Urban District Council, West Derby, with a population of 13,764. The reply states that the letter will be laid before the authority, and then it goes on "I am not aware, however, that there is any unusual distress in this district, though I have no doubt that, owing to the protracted frost, the means of livelihood in numerous instances are seriously curtailed and the sufferings of the poor greatly accentuated. I regret to add that when the surveyor recently wanted additional men to help to clear away the snow considerable difficulty was experienced in obtaining the required assistance." The next reply is from the Whickham District Council in Durham, with a population of 9,174. "At the last meeting of the Urban District Council it was decided to undertake some work with regard to widening roads and footpaths at once in the hope that the prevailing distress might to some extent be alleviated. The Council have also given instructions to the surveyor to prepare plans and estimate with a view of paving certain streets in the neighbourhood." Then the next is Walmer, with a population of 8,898. The letter says: "I am happy to state that the distress in the borough of Deal is not at the present time very great, although unquestionably a certain amount exists. My authority, some short time back, made arrangements for employing a number of unskilled workmen to fill up the Sandown Castle moat, recently purchased by them for the purpose of sea defence, and were prepared to give employment to a large number of men, in making up roads, etc., but unfortunately the frost intervened, and no work could be done. Immediately, however, on the break up of the present inclement weather, my authority will put as many men on as they possibly can with a view to mitigating the distress among the poorer classes." Then the next reply is from Eastbourne, with a population of 34,977. The letter says: "I regret to say that it is a fact that many men have for several weeks past been unemployed,

Chairman—continued.

and the Mayor has had to organise a relief fund. The council hoped to be in a position to proceed with their new sewerage works." Then comes the reply from the Thingoe Rural District Council, in Suffolk, which says: "The district council have already had the subject under consideration, and I have sent copies of the enclosed circular to each of the surveyors of highways of the parishes in this district, and the council trust it will be the means of providing some employment. It is difficult to provide work in a large district, and none of the kinds you enumerate are available to the council." The letter to the highway authorities was calling attention to the number of labouring men now out of employment, and suggesting that they should put them on for stone-raising and breaking without delay, if practicable. The next letter is from Woodbridge, in Suffolk, which says that "a general meeting of the parishioners of this town was held on Saturday last for the purpose of devising some means to assist those who are now thrown out of employment through the long continued frost, when it was suggested that the urban council should, if possible, find some work for the men. Acting on this suggestion, the council arranged as under: 9 men ditching (this on private property), 11 men breaking stones, 26 men raising stones, and the various hands began work on Monday. Owing to the hardness of the ground it is thought that the men raising stones will have to be paid a higher rate per load than is usually paid." Then the Huddersfield Town Council say that they "have already appointed a committee to confer with the Huddersfield Board of Guardians upon the subject." Then comes Banbury, in Oxfordshire, with a population of 12,767. Their reply states "that the council of this borough are now employing daily upwards of 150 men in constructing a considerable length of field-footpaths, and in levelling the existing recreation ground." Then the next is from Rhymney Urban District Council, with a population of 7,733—they say: "On the 6th instant the council, in anticipation of any distress which might arise in their district through loss of work during the present rigorous weather, directed their surveyor to procure a quantity of road ballast for the purpose of giving work at stone-breaking to any persons in want of employment. I am glad to be able to add that up to that time one person only had applied to the surveyor for employment, and so far there is no reason for thinking that there is any exceptional distress in our district arising from lack of employment." Then comes Tiverton with a population of 10,800. The reply states that the letter will be laid before the council: "Meanwhile I beg leave to point out that none of the works suggested as a means of employment can be proceeded with in weather such as we are now having which is the only cause of scarcity of employment in this borough." The next is Bedford with a population of 28,000—they say: "The system of relief works has been carried out in Bedford for many years. We generally prepare some important scheme so that it may be ready in case of a severe winter—and this year we are preparing pleasure resorts

Chairman—continued.

resorts for the town on the banks of our river." The next is Exmouth, in Devonshire, with a population of 8,000—they say: "I fear that at present no works of the kind indicated could be undertaken as the frost has penetrated the ground to the depth of nearly two feet. I may add, however, that a relief fund has been started by the Chairman, and relief in the shape of bread, coals and groceries has been issued to a very large number of people who are unemployed owing to the frost."

182. Are those a sufficient sample of the answers you have received?—I think so. Perhaps I may read the names of the remaining districts in the same way as previously—Christchurch, Llandudno, Derby.

Mr. *Bousfield.*

183. I should like to hear the reply from Derby?—The letter states "that the Mayor has opened a relief fund which is dealing with the distress in the borough caused by the protracted frost. The council have under their consideration certain schemes which will require considerable labour, and they have already employed men who are out of work in removing the snow and cleaning the streets. A contract has been let for the painting of the Borough Asylum which will find employment for a number of painters who are out of work." Then the next is Crewe.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

184. I should like to hear the reply from Crewe?—They refer to an inquiry which has been held as to the loan of 7,000*l.* for street improvements in the added parts of the borough, and they ask for sanction as early as possible in order that they may proceed with the works.

185. They do not mention any specific distress?—The letter goes on to say: "I wrote your board on the 3rd ultimo, sending them a newspaper paragraph about the great distress there was in Crewe, and the necessity for employment being found for the unemployed, and urging your board to forward the sanctions. In addition to the above sanction, the town council are anxiously awaiting a sanction for 1,450*l.*," for the making of a part of Minshull New Road, and if this sanction were granted it would also find considerable employment for the unemployed."

Mr. *Lawrence.*

186. Is that for a loan?—Yes. Then come Milnrow, in Lancashire, Twickenham, Stratton, in Cornwall, Ampthill, in Bedfordshire, and Hammersmith.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

187. Will you let us have the reply from Hammersmith?—They say: "This vestry has conferred with the Fulham Board of Guardians, and the vestry has agreed to employ able-bodied men out of work at stone breaking, the guardians agreeing to lend the vestry their stoneyard for the purpose, and to sell to the vestry their stock of unbroken granite. Instructions have been given to put on 100 men at once for this work. In addition, the vestry has 100 extra men employed upon the work of laying out a recreation ground at Shepherd's Bush and cleansing the streets, etc. There are also 20 extra masons employed redressing and squaring old paving stones, etc. The vestry is alive to the importance of the matter, and has been dealing with it as expeditiously and practically as possible."

Mr. Pickersgill—continued.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

188. Do they give any indication of the number of men who are unemployed?—No, not in this letter.

Mr. *Logan.*

189. Amongst these reports, have you any from any authorities that have found work other than stone breaking during the frost. Most of them say they are anxious to find work, but declare that owing to the frost they are unable to do so; has work of any sort been found by any of the authorities other than that of stone breaking?—Yes. Taking for instance the last letter I read from Hammersmith, they say; "100 extra men were employed upon the work of laying out a recreation-ground at Shepherd's Bush and cleansing the streets, etc. There are also 20 extra masons employed redressing and squaring old paving stone, etc."

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

190. I understood you to say that at Crewe they were making a new road?—Yes, that was so; and in several cases they refer to works other than mere stone breaking.

Mr. *Logan.*

191. I understood that most of the work had been stopped owing to the frost?—I should say that in only a comparatively small number of the cases I have read, have they stated that. The next reply is from St. Giles.'

Mr. *Bolton.*

192. What is the reply from St. Giles'?—They say that "the board concur with the Local Government Board in the desirability of aiding artizans and others who make great personal sacrifices in order to avoid the stigma of pauperism, to maintain their independence. The board at their meeting decided on various works to be carried out in the district during the ensuing year, and the necessary resolutions have been passed which will enable works involving a large expenditure of money being proceeded with as speedily as possible." Then there are replies from Dartmouth, Willington Quay, and Castleford, Yorkshire.

Mr. *Jackson.*

193. Castleford is rather a difficult district—will you tell us about that?—The reply states that the circular has been "duly considered and has come at an opportune time, for the want and misery here is deep and wide-spread. Two neighbouring gentlemen have offered to lease for 999 years at a nominal rent some 15 acres of land, which this council will, as soon as the documents are completed, proceed to lay out as public pleasure grounds, for which purpose I am

Mr. *Jackson*—continued.

instructed to ask the sanction of the Local Government Board to a first loan of 3,000*l.*, with the view of still further finding labour for the unemployed. I am to intimate the intention of this council to apply for your sanction for loans to pave two public streets." Then there are replies from Woking, Wigan, Lower Brixham, and St. Pancras.

Mr. *Bolton.*

194. What is the reply from St. Pancras?—They enclose a copy of a "report of the highways, sewers, and public works committee of the vestry which was adopted, and which shows the steps the vestry have taken recently to alleviate the distress prevalent among the unemployed." The report of the highways committee states that they "have given consideration to the representations of the deputation from the unemployed workmen in the parish, and have conferred with the Labour Bureau Committee on the whole subject, which is one of extreme difficulty, and in its general aspect lies beyond the province of such a body as the vestry to effectively deal with it under their limited powers, as the purpose of the rates levied in pursuance of the Statute they have to administer is limited to the execution of such works as are necessary for the public safety, health, and convenience. If the suggestions which are made almost every severe winter to promote earlier and to expedite the execution of those works which are contemplated were followed every time, the only result would be to exhaust at an earlier period than usual the means at the disposal of the vestry, and would probably result in the less efficient execution of some of the work by reason of its being undertaken in unsuitable weather; but your Committee regret to have to point out that the exceptional severity of the season, which has arrested progress with most structural works, has also brought to a standstill all such outdoor work as ordinarily comes within the scope of the Department under the charge of your Committee, as, for instance, the repaving of a portion of the Fortess-road, the sewerage works in Liverpool-street and Great College-street and other drainage works, as well as the repair of the macadamised roads." They then refer to occasional falls of snow, and say: "However, the resolute action taken by the department on each occasion has happily been the means of employing the whole of the large body of men in the vestry's service, as well as a numberof extra hands taken on for the purpose of clearing the streets." Then the report of the surveyor shows that on certain days, which are specified, in January and February, the number of extra men employed ranged from 43 to 811. Taking the 28th, 29th, and 31st of January, and the 1st and 2nd of February, the numbers of extra men were 686, 544, 251, 769, and 811. That was in addition to about 280 regular men employed. Then they say: "Your committee anticipate that when the frost breaks the condition of the streets will be such as will warrant the employment of a large additional number of scavengers, and your committee recall to mind that some years ago, under similar circumstances, the vestry authorised the

Mr. *Bolton*—continued.

employment of about 300 additional road sweepers in shifts of two or three days, so that the distress was somewhat mitigated by the performance of a work of public utility and comfort. Your committee therefore recommend: That immediately on the cessation of the frost the borough engineer and surveyor be authorised to employ a large force of additional road sweepers, in shifts as before, for as long as would be necessary to effect a thorough cleansing of the streets throughout the parish." Then there are letters from Alton in Hampshire, Grays in Essex, and Atherton in Lancashire.

Mr. *Mather.*

195. Is there anything about Atherton at all exceptional?—They state that they "had anticipated the suggestions contained in your Board's circular by commencing, about a month since, the expenditure of a loan sanctioned by your board in December last, and by employing all applicants for work who were living in the district. The report shows also that a considerable number of persons applied for work although there seemed to be at the time no unusual scarcity of the ordinary employment here, and there does not appear to have been any important increase in the applications for union relief. Considering the character of the employment and the small wages earned in very inclement weather it is considered that this experiment—although on a small scale—affords evidence of much real distress which does not obtain relief by the ordinary operation of the Poor Law. And, unfortunately, the work referred to was and remains quite suspended owing to the very severe frost, which has also had the effect of stopping all kinds of outdoor employment for the present." They say that they are unable to carry out any of the suggestions.

Mr. *Round.*

196. What is the reply from Grays in Essex?—This is the letter from the Grays Urban District Council. It is practically a rural district, though technically an urban district, with a population of 12,000: "The council are providing what work they can for the unemployed in their district, such as the removal of snow and cleansing of streets, where it is possible, notwithstanding the frost. They, however, are not in a position to carry out any expensive works, although they are carrying on negotiations for the widening of a road in their district which, if brought to a successful issue, will enable them to pay artisans and others by giving them employment. The Local Government Board may rest assured that so far as they can the council will carry out the suggestions of the Board contained in their circular." Then there is a reply from the Wandsworth and Clapham Union.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

197. I should like to hear that reply?—This letter is from the guardians, not from the vestry, and they merely enclose us a copy of the letter they have sent to the vestry. Then comes Richmond, Yorkshire; Church Stretton, Yorkshire, and St. George's, Hanover Square.

198. What

Mr. *John Burns.*

198. What did St. George's, Hanover Square, do?—The letter says that "The vestry are and have been doing all they can to alleviate the prevailng distress."

199. Is a list of works enclosed in that letter?—No; I have read practically the whole letter except the acknowledgement of our circular letter. Then come replies from Okehampton, Devon; Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council, Warwickshire; Peterborough; Torquay; Eccles, Lancashire; and St. George-in-the-East, London.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

200. What is the reply from St. George-in-the-East?—"That inasmuch as the vestry have no additional works which could at present be executed in the interest of the parish, either as regards sanitary or other works, they regret that they cannot undertake any further employment of labour." Then comes Nantwich, Cheshire, and Congleton, Cheshire. That completes the list.

Mr. *Logan.*

201. I understood you to say yesterday that you had some special reports from your own inspectors, in the small agricultural unions, to which the circulars have not been sent?—Yes; I have reports from the inspectors as to their districts, including agricultural unions.

Chairman.

202. What can you say to the Committee about those special reports—are they from purely agricultural districts?—They are not as to purely agricultural unions. What was done was this: as soon as the Committee was appointed a letter was written to each of our 13 inspectors, referring to the resolution passed by the House, and saying that: "The President will be obliged if you will furnish him with a report, giving any information which you now possess as to the extent of destitution amongst able-bodied men in your district in consequence of their being out of work, and as to any exceptional measures which have been taken by the guardians, whether by the opening of stone-yards or otherwise, with a view to affording relief in such cases, and also any information which you may have as to the funds which have been raised by means of charity for meeting the distress. The President will also be glad to be informed as to whether the present circumstances are, in your opinion, such as to make it desirable that there should be any temporary modification of the regulations of the Board with regard to outdoor relief in cases of able-bodied men who are out of work, and, if so, what modifications you would suggest." Those reports, I may say, were prepared very hurriedly. That letter was sent on the 13th of February—the day the resolution was passed, and we had the reports in on Monday, so that the inspectors were utilising the information they then had; but in some cases they communicated with a number of persons in their district.

Mr. *Jackson.*

203. Has it been possible to make any summary of the answers, or do they vary as the others do?—They vary very much; you cannot summarise them. The reports could be put in if it were thought desirable.

Chairman.

204. Do they bear upon the present urgent distress or upon the general question?—On the present condition of things from the point of view of the Poor Law, not on the question of the number of persons out of employment who are not coming to the guardians for relief.

Mr. *Logan.*

205. Do the reports show any very exceptional distress, among the agricultural labourers generally, in the districts from which you have reports?—No, I could not say that they do.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

206. Have you a report from East Anglia?—Yes.

Mr. *Logan.*

207. Notwithstanding that we hear so much of agricultural distress, in the purely agricultural districts. Among the agricultural labourers your inspectors do not report to you that such exceptional distress does exist?—I should hardly like to give a general answer to a question of that kind, because the circumstances vary so much in different districts. I think there can be no doubt that, during the recent severe weather, many agricultural labourers have been thrown out of work; but, on the other hand, I think there is no doubt, in a great many cases, the farmers are still continuing to employ and doing their best to find work for them.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

208. Do you not find a very great difference between the distress on the stiff lands of Essex and Suffolk and the very small modicum of distress on the loose land—the potato growing land of Yorkshire?—I am not very well able to answer that question. The reports of the inspectors contain a good deal of information, and, as I said, in two or three cases the inspector communicated at once with a number of people in the district, and obtained the best replies he could.

Chairman.

209. Perhaps you will put in the reports of the inspectors so that they can be printed?—Yes (*handing in the same*).

210. To resume what you have to tell us about the administration of relief, I believe that is governed by regulations issued by the Local Government Board or their predecessors. Will you state what are the statutory powers of the Board in this matter?—The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 4th and 5th William IV., chap. 76, by Section 15 provides "That from and after the passing of this Act the administration of relief to the poor throughout England and Wales according to the existing laws or such laws as shall be in force at the time being shall be subject to the direction and control of the said Commissioners; and for executing the powers

Chairman—continued.

given to them by this Act the said Commissioners shall and are hereby authorised and required from time to time as they shall see occasion to make and issue all such rules, orders, and regulations for the management of the poor, for the government of workhouses," and so on as they shall think proper. Then there is a special provision with regard to the able-bodied. It is Section 52. It recites that "A practice has obtained of giving relief to persons or their families who at the time of applying for or receiving such relief were wholly or partially in the employment of individuals, and the relief of the able-bodied and their families is in many places administered in modes productive of evil in other respects," and then it enacts that, "It shall be lawful for the said Commissioners by such rules, orders or regulations as they may think fit to declare, to what extent and for what period, the relief to be given to able-bodied persons or to their families in any particular parish or union may be administered out of the workhouse of such parish or union by payments in money, or with food or clothing in kind, or partly in kind and partly in money, and in what proportions, to what persons or class of persons at what times and places, on what conditions, and in what manner such outdoor relief may be afforded; and all relief which shall be given by any overseer, guardian, or other person having the control or distribution of the funds of such parish or union, contrary to such orders or regulations, shall be and the same is hereby declared to be unlawful, and shall be disallowed in the accounts of the persons giving the same." Provided "that in case the overseers or guardians of any parish or union in which such orders or regulations shall be in force shall depart from them or any of them in any particular instance or instances of emergency, and shall within 15 days after every such departure report the same, and the grounds thereof, to the said commissioners, and the said commissioners shall approve of such departure, or if the relief so given shall have been given in food, temporary lodging, or medicine, and shall have been so reported as aforesaid, then and in either of such cases the relief granted by such overseers or guardians, if otherwise lawful, shall not be unlawful or subject to be disallowed."

211. Will you now state what are the regulations of the Local Government Board in force with regard to the relief of able-bodied persons out of the workhouse. I think there are two Orders, are there not?—Yes, one is termed the Out Relief Regulation Order, and was issued on the 14th of December 1852. This Order is in force in nearly all the unions of large population. Shall I specify the articles in the order?

212. Is that necessary. I think the gist of it is contained, is it not, in a memorandum by yourself which is printed in the "report on agencies and methods for dealing with the unemployed" at page 144?—That is so. I would only say this: there are these two Orders on which the whole system of administration by guardians as regards out relief to persons destitute by reason of want of work turns; so that they are of some importance. I can put them in if that would be the more convenient course.

Chairman—continued.

213. You have two Orders, the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order and the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order?—Yes, the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order is usually supplemented by another Order, the Labour Test Order, and when that Order is in force, there is very little difference beween the two classes of Order.

214. Perhaps you would put those Orders in?—Yes (*handing in the same*).

215. There is an exception in both Orders, is there not, as to cases of sudden and urgent necessity?—Yes. Might I state briefly that the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order provides that "Whenever the guardians allow relief to any able bodied male person out of the workhouse, one-half at least of the relief so allowed shall be given in articles of food or fuel, or in other articles of absolute necessity." It also provides that "No relief shall be given to any able-bodied male person while he is employed for wages or other hire or remuneration by any person." And also that "Every able-bodied male person, if relieved out of the workhouse, shall be set to work by the guardians and be kept employed under their direction and superintendence so long as he continues to receive relief." Then there are certain exceptions to those cases. The Regulations are not to be imperative when a person is receiving relief on account of sudden and urgent necessity, or in "the case of a person receiving relief on account of any sickness, accident, or bodily or mental infirmity affecting such person or any of his family," or in "The case of a person receiving relief for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the burial of any of his family"; or in "The case of the wife, child, or children of a person confined in any gaol or place of safe custody." Then there is an article that requires that the class of work which is proposed to be imposed should be reported to the Poor Law Board, and then there is a provision which enables the guardians, in cases where they think exception should be made and relief given without requiring the person either to go into the workhouse or to submit to the labour test, to make an exception subject to the sanction of the Local Government Board. Those really are the main provisions of the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order. The Prohibitory Order makes similar exceptions to the requirement that the person shall be relieved in the workhouse; but that Order, in the great majority of cases, is supplemented by the Labour Test Order, which practically puts in force provisions similar to those in the Order I have referred to.

216. Would you say what is the usual labour test when the guardians impose a test upon those receiving outdoor relief?—It consists in stone-breaking, I should think, to the largest extent; or oakum picking; and in some cases wood chopping; and in some cases, where the guardians have land in connection with the workhouse, the men are placed at work upon the land.

Mr. *Jackson.*

217. Does that mean digging?—Yes.

218. I suppose

Chairman.

218. I suppose the test is limited to work of that character in consequence of the difficulties of finding other suitable employment?—That is so.

Mr. *Bolton.*

219. And in consequence of the opposition of other trades, to the use of pauper labour?—Yes; there is an instance of that kind with regard to wood chopping.

Chairman.

220. As regards wood chopping, there were representations made, were there not, by persons interested in the trade?—Yes, that was with regard to wood chopping by the inmates of workhouses. Great complaints were made that the guardians were competing most unfairly with those who were endeavouring to get a livelihood by that work.

221. When a test is imposed how are the payments made, are they based on the amount of work done?—No. It is in that way that the labour test differs from work for which wages are paid. It has been always the practice to consider, as regards the amount that is paid, the circumstances of the individual. He is paid, not according to the work done, but according to his necessities, by reason of the number of the members of the family that he has to support.

222. It is a test; not a wage, in fact?—It is simply as a test of destitution that the task of work is imposed.

223. You have referred to the very large increase of pauperism in London; has it been general throughout London. I presume it has been exceptional in particular districts?—Yes, the variations are very considerable, indeed. I may say that London is divided into five districts; and taking the return for the first week of February, 1895, as compared with the corresponding week in 1894, in the west district (which has a population of 740,000) it shows a net increase of 1,778 persons in receipt of relief, representing an increase of 13·5 per cent.

224. How are those five divisions constituted?—I do not think they are divisions for any other purpose except the Registrar General's returns.

225. Could you put in those returns?—Yes, I can do so; but I may say the differences are very marked. Comparing the returns of the first week of February, 1895 with the returns of the first week of February, 1894, in the north district (which has a population of 993,000) the increase in the number of persons in receipt of relief in February, 1895, is 4,208, which represents an increase of 17·6 per cent. The central district has a population of 247,000.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

226. What does that district comprise?—It comprises St. Giles' and St. George, Bloomsbury, Strand, Holborn and the City of London, Holborn including Clerkenwell, St. Luke's, and the Holborn District Board of Works. The increase in that district is 537, giving a percentage of 4·7. In the east district (comprising Shoreditch, Bethnal Green, Whitechapel, St. George in the East, Stepney, Mile End Old Town, and Poplar) with a population of 705,000, the increase is 1,051, giving a percentage of 5·7. In the south district, with a population of 1,524,000, the increase is 19,772, giving a percentage of increase of 49·7. When you come to the particular unions in that district which chiefly contribute to the increase, you have Camberwell with an increase of 4,866, being at the rate of 75·3 per cent. increase; and St. Olave's with an increase of 7,167, being at the rate of 138·2 per cent. In fact, out of the 19,772, which is the increase of the south district, Camberwell and St. Olave's account for 12,033.

Mr. *Jackson.*

227. Have you the figures of the population represented by Camberwell and St. Olave's. The total population of the south district being 1,500,000, can you say what is the population of Camberwell and St. Olave's?—The population of Camberwell is 235,000, and of St. Olave's 136,000.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

228. Is there any reason assigned for that enormous increase?—As I was mentioning yesterday, a stoneyard was opened at St. Olave's, and they have been giving what is comparatively a somewhat liberal rate of relief; and there is no doubt it is a district which must, at the present time, suffer very heavily. There are so many whose ordinary occupation is on the river.

229. Engaged as watermen and lightermen?—Yes. St. Olave's Union would include not only the St. Olave's District Board of Works, but Bermondsey and Rotherhithe.

Mr. *Jackson.*

230. It is principally outdoor labour, in fact?—Yes, and a good deal on the river. Moreover, the leather trade has been dwindling. With regard to St. Olave's, a report I have here says: "The St. Olave's Union lies in a loop of the Thames, and has a river frontage of four miles, from London Bridge to Limehouse. It comprises the three districts of Rotherhithe, Horsleydown, and Bermondsey — the former includes Southwark Park and the Surrey Commercial Docks. The industries of the two latter are leather dressing and river-side labour. As before stated, the leather industry has been for some years a decaying one, while the chief imports to the docks being corn and timber but few ships arrive during the winter, and business is brisk but for five months in the year, viz., May to the end of September."

231. That is the report, I understand, of one of your inspectors?—Yes. He adds: "There is no doubt the circumstances of the district are peculiar in that there is a considerable floating population irregularly employed, which is specially affected by sharp and continued frost. As a result of the severe weather now prevailing, all river-side work is at a standstill." I might say that he goes on to state: "Nevertheless, had the scale of relief been less and the work better regulated, the numbers relieved would not, in my belief, have reached the proportions they have."

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

232. In previous winters when there has been distress has anything like a similar result been shown in St. Olave's?—I do not think there has been a result previously anything like this; but I have not the figures for 1890–91. I can get them, and lay them before the Committee.

233. It does not come to your recollection at the moment?—No.

Mr. *Jackson.*

234. When was the last severe frost?—The last severe frost was in 1890–91; it lasted for 59 days—from November 25 to January 22.

Mr. *Bolton.*

235. Can you give us similar information as to Camberwell?—I have a statement here which refers to the number in receipt of out-relief, according to a return on the 26th of January: "The number of able-bodied receiving relief is highest in Districts 3 and 6. These include North Peckham, Nunhead, and Dulwich, where building operations which were in progress are stopped by frost. The majority of able-bodied applying for relief are bricklayers, carpenters, painters, and general labourers. The distress is locally regarded as temporary and exceptional, owing to the severe weather under which building and other outdoor operations are suspended. The nearest to the present total was reached during the winter of 1891, when there was a spell of cold weather. In 1891, on January 17th, the numbers were: adults, 2,165; children, 2,316; making a total of 4,481, as against 3,816 in 1894, and 5,668 now."

Mr. *Jackson.*

236. The numbers were larger in January, 1891, than they are now?—They were larger in 1891, than they were in 1894, but less than they are now.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

237. How was it in the case of St. Olave's?—I have not the figures for 1890-1 for St. Olave's.

238. Have you got the percentage of the number relieved in St. Olave's in comparison to the population?—Yes, the percentage of increase is 138·2. Then this return as to Camberwell adds "The population of the parish is estimated to have increased since 1891 from 235,000 to 260,000. No task of work is required of able-bodied receiving out relief, the guardians having authorised the relieving officers to treat all applications as sudden and urgent cases, and relieve on their own authority between the meetings of the Board."

Mr. *John Burns.*

239. Do I understand you to say that there is no test for the receipts of relief in St. Olave's?—No; I was referring to Camberwell.

Chairman.

240. Does that complete the southern division?—I have referred to the two districts in the southern division where the largest increase takes place. It is also very high in Greenwich. It is 66·5 per cent. there. The total number of persons relieved in the first week of February, 1895, in St. Olave's was 12,354; in Camberwell it was 11,328; and in Greenwich 7,302.

Chairman—continued.

Mr. *Jackson.*

241. When you say the total number relieved—does that mean the number of persons applying or does it mean number of reliefs given?—That is the number of persons relieved, including in each case the husband and wife and the several children under 16 years of age.

Chairman.

242. That is where the husband himself is the principal subject of relief?—Yes. The numbers I gave last are the total number of persons in receipt of relief, indoor and outdoor.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

243. They would be actual inhabitants of St. Olave's?—They should be.

244. In connection with the labour yard offer of sixpence an hour, did not that attract a number of people into St. Olaves who were not actual inhabitants?—Yes, but the authority subsequently checked that by determining to give relief only to persons who had been living in the parish for six months; and not to give relief in this form to persons who were living at common lodging houses.

245. Were the numbers reduced after that determination was come to?—They were reduced, and considerably reduced, at first, but they went up again very rapidly; and at the last date they were larger than they were at any period previously.

Chairman.

246. You have now gone through all the divisions of the Metropolis, have you not?—Yes.

247. It is understood, with regard to the reports from your inspectors as to the districts outside the Metropolis, that you will be good enough to put them in, in order that they may be printed for the Committee?—Yes.

Mr. *John Wilson* (*Govan*).

248. I would like to ask you whether it is your opinion that if this severe weather was mitigated, and the bulk of those that are employed in labour that is stopped on account of the severe weather were able to resume work, that would not to a very large extent minimise the difficulty we have to deal with at the present moment of so many being unemployed?—I think there is no doubt, from the letters—of which I have read a good many—that the feeling is, that as soon as the frost goes the distress will be to a large extent mitigated; but, at the same time, there are districts where, apart from the frost, there are local circumstances connected with the industries which are depressed which will have an effect after the frost passes away.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

249. When you receive an application such as that which you read to us from Castleford, for the Local Government Board's sanction to a loan of 3,000*l.*, in order to enable them to expend money to relieve the present distress, do you sanction it?—The proposals come to us in connection

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley*—continued.

connection with particular works for which loans would be sanctioned quite independently of any question as to the unemployed. As showing rather the course which has been taken by the Board, I may mention a case which we had last week. We had an urgent application for sanction to a loan in order that the unemployed might be set to work at once. The loan was, I think, for 6,000*l.* or 7,000*l.* It was felt that it would not be right to sanction that loan without a local inquiry. We fixed an early date for the local inquiry, but in the meanwhile—in fact, on the following day, I think it was—we sent an inspector down to see whether there were any of those works to the extent of, perhaps, 500*l.* or 600*l.* in amount, for which it was quite clear that a loan might properly be sanctioned, so that the district might have the benefit of that money immediately, reserving the question as to the loan for the larger works until after the local inquiry had been held. There is no different rule adopted as regards sanctioning loans in the winter from what there is in the summer; there is the same local inquiry as far as possible.

250. In the case of a recreation ground or park (I think it was a park in the case of Castleford), what is the term of years over which you allow them to spread the repayment of the loan?—If it were for the purchase of the land the term would probably be 50 years. Then the term for the cost of laying out would not exceed 20 years. We usually allow different periods for different classes of works; for instance, seats and works of a comparatively temporary character would have one term, and more substantial works a longer one, and so on. Then we arrive at an equated term for the whole loan.

Mr. *Renshaw.*

251. In regard to the table on which I think you gave a certain amount of evidence, I should like to ask you whether it is not the case that there has been a considerable reduction in the amount of outdoor pauperism between the present time and the two most difficult periods in administration which preceded it, namely the period, 1867 to 1869 and subsequently the period about 1879. Is it not a fact, that relatively there has been a very considerable reduction in the total number of applicants for out-door relief, those to whom outdoor relief has been extended, as compared with those who have been in receipt of indoor relief?—That is so. Taking, for instance, the returns for the fourth week in December for the whole country, beginning with 1857, these are the figures——

252. Would you give us those figures separately for the Metropolis, and for the rest of England and Wales?—Since 1857, and the number of indoor poor and outdoor poor separately, and not merely the total?

253. Yes?—That the numbers in receipt of outdoor relief have been very much greater in the past than they are now there is no doubt whatever. There has been a very large diminution——

254. In those two periods that I referred to, or about those two periods, what are the numbers?—From 1857 to 1862 the numbers in

Mr. *Renshaw*—continued.

receipt of outdoor relief varied from 767,000 to 959,000. In 1862 it was 959,000, and we have now got down to 512,000. The great diminution in pauperism has been in the outdoor relief. The number of indoor poor has increased, but to nothing like the same extent.

255. Could you give us the figures in regard to the increase in indoor poor?—Since 1857 it has increased from 129,000 to 207,000.

256. That is over the whole country?—Over the whole country.

257. And taking the Metropolis separately?—No, including the Metropolis.

258. Could you give us the figures for the Metropolis separately in regard to both?—Yes. The number of indoor poor since 1857 has increased from 29,000 to 66,000; the outdoor poor have decreased from 72,000 to 37,000. But in intervening years, from 1867 to 1871, the numbers of outdoor poor were 110,000, 107,000, 116,000, and 111,000 against the present 37,000. I am taking the fourth week in December for the Metropolis.

259. Then in regard to the table upon page 11 I think of that return, is it not the case that during the first week in December out of 11 districts into which the country is divided, eight showed a decrease in the total number of relief afforded, and only three showed an increase in the first week in December?—That is so.

260. Whilst, taking the last week in December, when the colder weather had begun to set in, there had been a change, and it showed a decrease in only four and an increase in seven of the 11 districts?—That is so, the total net increase being 3,837.

261. And it is also the case, is it not, that in the first week in December the difference in percentage showed a decrease of 1·1, whilst in the last week in December it showed an increase of only decimal ·5?—Yes.

262. With reference to a circular which you spoke of having issued in the years 1886 and 1892 and 1893, which you have again issued on the 11th February of this year, may I ask you in what months that was issued in the previous years?—March 15th, 1886; 11th January, 1887 (that was addressed to the metropolitan vestries and district boards); the 16th January, 1891 (that also was addressed to the metropolitan authorities); the 14th November, 1892; the 30th September, 1893; the 11th February, 1895.

263. I should like to ask you whether your attention has ever been directed to the difference between the system under which outdoor relief is administered in England, and the fact that under the Scotch Poor Law outdoor relief is not given?—It is not given to the able-bodied.

264. To the able-bodied?—Yes.

265. Has your attention ever been directed to that as to the effect which it has upon the pauperism of the two countries?—My impression is that England stands better than Scotland, notwithstanding.

266. Relatively to the population?—Yes; that is my impression.

267. There is a smaller number, you think?—Yes; I may be wrong. I have not referred to the statistics lately.

Mr. *Thomas Henry Bolton.*

268. With regard to the accounts kept by the guardians in giving relief, are they kept in such a way that during, we will say, a year the recipient of relief can be traced and identified?—With a view of ascertaining the precise amount that a particular person had received, do you mean?

269. Yes; and how frequently he has been relieved?—That could be ascertained.

270. What period do the books of the guardians run over from which these figures that you have given us are taken?—The returns refer to the number of persons actually in receipt of relief at the end of the particular week I have mentioned; it is not an average number; it is the number at the end of the week.

271. Then there are no statistics which show how frequently particular people have been relieved during the year so as to identify the person?—There is extreme difficulty in getting out those facts for any large number of persons. In connection with the appointment of the Aged Poor Commission a return was moved for as to the number of persons who throughout the year had at any time been in receipt of relief; but usually, apart from these weekly statistics, a sort of average is obtained. We get on the 1st January in each year a very detailed statement of the different classes of paupers, and the number under each head; we get a similar statement on the 1st July, and then adding the two together and dividing we obtain what we call the *mean*; and we have the *mean* statement of pauperism based on the returns for the two days mentioned for a long period of years.

272. The sole test of relief is destitution under the Poor Law?—It is destitution, and destitution only, that the guardians have the duty of relieving.

273. And persons who are merely out of employment from that fact alone are not entitled to relief?—Clearly not, unless the fact of their being out of employment makes them destitute.

274. But destitution is the sole test?—Destitution is the sole test from whatever cause it may arise, whether from sickness, want of work, or any other cause.

275. Have there been any suggestions made that there should be any other tests in boards of guardians?—I know of none.

276. Do you think it would be a good or a very bad thing to lay down any other test than destitution?—I think it would be altogether foreign to the whole principle of the Poor Law and to the constitution of the guardians, that they should have imposed upon them any duty beyond that of relieving destitution.

277. Have the guardians any power whatever to deal with distress arising from want of employment other than want of employment from destitution?—No, they have not. The lines on which the circulars to which I have referred have been based were these: Although as regards the great majority of the persons who apply for relief the ordinary test of the workhouse—or the labour test—might be desirable, yet there were times when, in consequence of very exceptional circumstances, persons above the ordinary pauper class were requiring relief, and if possible they should obtain

Mr. *Thomas Henry Bolton*—continued.

the assistance they needed without becoming a charge on the rates and without receiving relief from the guardians. It was considered that that should, as far as circumstances would admit, be brought about by the vestries or the urban authorities expediting works that they might be proposing to carry out, so that employment might be given, and that the guardians when they received applications for relief might make a selection, handing over to the vestries by way of recommendation the persons who they thought ought, if possible, to be relieved by being afforded employment without the stigma which might be regarded as attaching to them if they were relieved by the guardians; the guardians giving relief in the other cases under the ordinary tests.

278. Do not you think that if a new official were established, whose business should be in each parish to organise charitable relief in co-operation with the guardians, that would be a very good way of dealing with exceptional cases?—There is a very great advantage from co-operation between guardians and charitable organisations, especially with the view of preventing persons getting money from several different sources at the same time; but I rather doubt whether those administering charitable relief would like having an officer forced upon them in any way to control their action.

279. Not to control their action; but could not you have a sort of almoner of charitable relief whose business it should be to attend the board of guardians, and to as far as possible organise the charities of the district so that exceptional cases which the guardians thought ought to be dealt with outside the poor law relief could be handed over to him?—That is already done in some cases. In St. George's-in-the-East they adopt an extremely stringent rule of practically refusing outdoor relief, but they are quite sensible of the fact that that would mean considerable hardship in some cases if there were no alternative but to come into the workhouse. If, therefore, they come across a case which they consider would involve hardship they arrange for some assistance being given by means of a charitable association in the parish.

280. Do not you think that the existence of an officer such as I have suggested, whose position and duties should be known in the neighbourhood, who should have knowledge of all the parties and charitable persons, and the agencies to deal with cases outside the Poor Law, would be a great advantage, and practically deal with most of the cases that ought to be dealt with outside the Poor Law?—There is no doubt that it would be a great advantage if you could secure accurate information as to all the charity that is being distributed in a particular district at a particular time, and the parties to whom reference might be made as regards cases to which it would be hard to apply the strict principles of the Poor Law; but, as I have said before, I rather doubt whether you would find that the charitable associations would quite submit to that.

281. It would not be necessary, would it, for them to submit to any control? He would be an officer

Mr. *Thomas Henry Bolton*—continued.

officer whose business it would be to work outside the Poor Law? Would not that be an advantage to them—not an embarrassment?—They would have to submit the particulars as to the persons to whom they were distributing charity, and what they gave, and information of that kind, I imagine. But so far as the boards of guardians are concerned there is not only St. George's-in-the-East, but there are some other boards of guardians where active members of the Charity Organization Society are guardians, and they take care to look after cases which they think ought to be dealt with otherwise than by the Poor Law.

282. Has not that system been worked very satisfactorily in the parishes where it has been adopted?—I believe that it has.

283. Both in the sense of increasing independence among the working population, and in affording judicious relief?—I have no doubt that it has had that effect. It has kept persons from what they would have regarded as the stigma of pauperism, where that, under the exceptional circumstances, would have involved some hardship.

284. The suffering from want of employment, I suppose, is not confined to the labour classes, as we understand them, is it?—There are a great many persons in the category of clerks, shopmen, and persons doing very light work—who dress respectably and make a certain appearance—who are just as badly off in reality as the labour classes of whom we hear a great deal at meetings?—I am afraid there are a great many of that class whose position is a somewhat pitiable one.

285. Among the applications made to the Board by boards of guardians to deal with this question, have you had any specific proposals outside the ordinary labour work of the workhouse?—There have been one or two proposals, such as one that was made by the Portsea Island Guardians (the Portsea Island Union includes Portsmouth) where they asked that the guardians should contribute a sum of 500*l.* towards the mayor's relief fund; and there was also an application from West Ham, where it was desired that a certain sum should be handed over to the corporation—and probably to other local authorities of the union—with the view of diminishing the loss (I think perhaps I ought to express it in that way) which the corporation might have to bear in consequence of giving work during the hard frost.

286. Has there been any proposal to open any workshops from any of the guardians or local authorities?—No proposal to open a workshop.

287. No proposal?—No.

288. Has there been any proposal to take any land to set the unemployed to work upon?—I should say that as regards taking land, if the guardians of any union came to the Board and said that they required a small area of land for the purpose of applying a labour test, consent would probably be given. If they have now, in connection with their workhouse, a certain area of land which is cultivated by the indoor poor, of course that land could be used for setting the able bodied to work as a test if the weather were such as to admit of it. But then there have been general

Mr. *Thomas Henry Bolton*—continued.

proposals of another kind, and they have been as to the purchase of land or the hiring of land, for setting persons to work—not giving them relief, but paying them reasonable wages for their work. The only case, so far as I remember, where we received an application from a board of guardians with reference to a proposal of this character, was from Croydon. I am referring to the present year. The Croydon guardians asked the Board to issue regulations subject to which land might be hired for that purpose. Last year also the Board were asked—in very general terms—whether they would assent to schemes of the character referred to; and the reply that was given was that if the guardians would submit, fully worked out as regards details, the proposals which they would wish to carry out, the proposals would be considered; and that as regards the issue of regulations, if issued they would be issued in connection with the particular cases; but as yet there has been no board of guardians that has worked out any scheme; and my impression is that they feel that there is extreme difficulty in doing so.

289. Where the rural unions and, in fact, the London unions where the workhouse is outside London have a certain portion of land, they have only used their land for the purpose of growing vegetables for the consumption of the inmates of the house, I believe?—That is ordinarily the case, no doubt; but sometimes they have a surplus which they can sell.

290. And which they do sell?—And which they do sell.

291. Has there been any of these unions in the country that have asked to be permitted to take more land for the purpose of employing more people upon the land?—No; I do not think there has been a single proposal of that kind from any provincial union. The only three or four unions where any representations have been made upon the subject, so far as I remember, have been all in London.

292. What is about the average area of land which boards of guardians have worked by pauper labour—the quantity?—It is rather difficult to say. There are about 650 workhouses. There is one union where they have almost a little farm; they rear stock there; the master of the workhouse devotes a good deal of time to it; but it is quite an exceptional case. Ordinarily the area of land acquired in connection with the workhouse is only of such an extent as to afford means of occupation to the inmates of the workhouse; to get pleasant surroundings for the inmates; and to prevent buildings being erected too close to the workhouse.

293. There are very few unions where they produce by work upon land enough vegetables to supply the workhouse?—I should think that there were many unions where they did that—agricultural unions.

294. While there would be no objection I suppose to giving the guardians of the union power to take land for the employment of the inmates of the workhouse who are permanent paupers (if I may use such a term) there would be very considerable objection, I presume, to giving them power to take more land than they require for that purpose so as to have a surplus

Mr. *Thomas Henry Bolton*—continued.

produce that they would have to sell?—The guardians could not purchase the land without the consent of the Board, and the Board in each case would be satisfied that their proposals were reasonable in character as regards the extent of the land which they were acquiring.

295. So that the board would restrict them to a quantity of land sufficient in its cultivation to produce food for the workhouse?—I do not think that that rule would be very stringently laid down. It would not always be easy to say what extent of land would be required for that purpose, and that purpose only. Very often it happens that the stock of a particular vegetable at a particular time would be more than was required for the workhouse, and some of them would have to be sold.

296. If they went in for market gardening then, for that is what it would amount to, they would, I suppose, at once have the same criticism that the guardians who went in for wood chopping had from the wood choppers?—I have no doubt they would in the neighbourhood of towns.

297. Would it not be very difficult to work any considerable quantity of land by pauper labour?—Are you referring to labour as imposed as a test for out-relief, or labour in the way of labour given for wages.

298. I will postpone that for the present in accordance with the suggestion of Mr. Keir-Hardie. Do you see any way of enlarging the work of the guardians so as to enable them to grapple with this present increase of pauperism in certain districts of London and certain parts of the country?—I think the guardians have now all the powers they require for giving relief (and adequate relief) in all cases of destitution where they are applied to for aid; and I cannot myself realise that there would ever be practically any serious difficulty in raising the rates that might be required by them for that purpose. My own view is that the powers of the guardians should, in the future, as in the past, be limited to dealing simply with destitution—destitution relieved by moneys compulsorily levied by rates.

299. Then you do not think it desirable that the powers of the guardians should be increased in any way to deal with this present distress?—I have not heard myself of any suggestion as to the inability of the guardians, so far as the classes that apply to them for relief is concerned, to deal with the distress.

300. Now, with regard to the municipal authorities with whom you have to deal: Do you think it would be wise to give the municipal authorities power to deal with cases of want of employment apart from the necessities and requirements of the town, and the desirability of particular improvements in the town over which they exercise authority?—I think the necessities of the district have primarily to be considered, but that it is a considerate act on the part of vestries and other local authorities so to divide their work, as far as possible, that some of that work should be given out at a time when it is specially needed in consequence of the difficulties at a particular period of the year in obtaining employment.

301. Then what you mean is that the local authority should consider what works are necessary throughout the year, and should apportion a certain part of the money raised to the work which can be deferred from the better weather to the worst weather?—I think that there is work that could very well be so undertaken. There are many parishes in London where much work that is desirable is not done. There is not, sometimes, that cleansing of the streets which is desirable, and the opportunity of the bad weather might be taken for giving more work of that kind than is done at other periods of the year.

302. But, apart from cleansing the streets, there is very little work that has to be done by a municipal authority that can be done by unskilled labour (I mean labour that is not skilled in the particular work) is there?—There is a certain amount of unskilled work which would be available in road making, probably. Of course there is a great deal of skilled work, and the larger proportion of the work would be skilled; but, at the same time, unskilled labour might be utilised. That was shown to be the case at the time of the public works in Lancashire during the cotton famine. The cotton operatives were employed to a very large extent on works of that character.

303. Of course a large number of the unemployed consist of men who are fine workmen—that is to say, men whose work requires delicacy of touch and a certain special skill, and those persons would be very difficult to deal with in the shape of hard work such as a municipal authority would have at its disposal?—I am afraid there would be no alternative but for them to undertake that work unless charity intervened.

304. You see the reference to us is to report what steps can "be taken whether by changes in legislation or administration to deal with the evils," and the evils are: "Distress arising from want of employment." Now do you think that the municipal authority should have increased powers to deal with distress from want of employment?—I think that they have already all the powers that they need. Their duty is to provide for their districts certain works—sewerage works, drainage works, street paving, and so on; and it comes to be a matter rather of their discretion as to the time which they will select for the carrying out of those works.

305. But in the quantity of the work, and the work itself, is it not the duty of a municipal authority to consider as to the necessity of work done at the expense of the rates, and the advantage of work done at the expense of the rates, and to have regard to those considerations almost exclusively?—They are the important considerations, there is no doubt, that the authority should have regard to.

306. Are there any other considerations which a municipal authority has to entertain besides the necessity for the work and the advantage to the community of the work?—No, these are the material considerations; but those two words "necessity" and "advantage" cover a good deal. Certain works in the way of cleansing the streets it might be urged are not necessary, yet there might be considerable advantage in its being done.

307. But

Mr. *Thomas Henry Bolton*—continued.

307. But the cleansing of streets ought to be done whether there is a want of employment in the neighbourhood or not?—Yes, I quite agree; but it is not always done.

308. The requirement is not because there is a want of employment, but because the work has to be done—is not that the proper way of looking at it?—Should be done, but might not be done, were it not for the additional reason.

309. Then it amounts to this—that all that the municipal authority should be empowered to do is to give a little more work, and to attend to matters a little more thoroughly at times of distress so as to give employment to men out of work?—I should rather say that the local authorities have certain statutory powers; that they can, as regards some of the works which they execute under those powers, without inconvenience and without disadvantage, cause them to be carried out at a time when the work is of additional value to the working classes, but I think that the works that are undertaken should be works which are either necessary for the district or for the advantage of the district.

310. In the districts where works such as you have mentioned are most desirable, the districts are very poor, are not they—many of them?—Not necessarily so. No doubt there are districts where the expenses are high and where works are avoided as much as possible—especially the extra work of cleansing that I was referring to.

311. Would you think it desirable, that from any Imperial funds, any assistance should be given to these poor districts to do these desirable works which you suggest, so as to give employment?—No. If the starting-point is that the works are necessary for the district, and for the advantage of the district, presumably the district ought to pay for them; and there would be no ground for a State contribution.

312. Then you do not recommend any grant from Parliament to assist districts in difficulty in dealing with works of advantage which might give employment?—I should see the greatest possible difficulty in carrying out a scheme of distribution of grants. You have some 1,500 districts, and I think you would find the greatest possible difficulty in devising any scheme by which grants could be awarded according to necessity.

313. Then you are of opinion that each district should be left to deal with its own unemployed and to embark in such works as it may think necessary and desirable with a view to giving work to its unemployed at its own expense?—That has been the case hitherto, and I cannot myself say that I see any arrangement by which State aid could be given to particular districts. First, how could you ascertain the districts to which grants ought to be made?

314. Are there any districts in London or in the provinces so afflicted with unemployed as to render it necessary, in your opinion, as a man of large experience, to make grants from Imperial funds for the purpose of affording relief?—I think not. I do not see how grants could be made to districts in London without taking into account all the districts throughout the country.

Mr. *Thomas Henry Bolton*—continued.

315. And your opinion is that each district must be left to deal with its own unemployed?—I am afraid you would have districts qualifying for the grant if there was any anticipation that, if a certain expenditure was exceeded, some Imperial aid was to be granted.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

316. You told us that prior to January the distress was not so great and that the circular you issued was issued on the 24th January. Will you kindly tell the Committee the reasons why that circular was issued?—Yes. I stated that December showed rather a decrease in pauperism—but a very slight decrease—and that in the earlier weeks of January we had no reason at all to suppose that there was any exceptional distress; but as the month proceeded and the weather was becoming severe, we were led to think that it would at any rate be wise to issue that circular to obtain information from the guardians as to what actually was the state of things. It was merely a letter of inquiry.

317. Since January the 24th the effect of that circular has been to produce 70 reports of a favourable character?—No, I should not say that. There were many that were favourable, but there were others that stated that there had been a very considerable increase of pauperism.

318. Seventy out of the number of reports that you received?—No; I said that out of the 93 cases where the circular had been sent we had received 70 answers. That number has been increased by those I have read to-day—I referred specially to the replies in 50 out of the 70.

319. Fifty out of 70?—Yes.

320. In 50 cases out of 70 the reports were favourable?—I must guard myself there a little. In 50 cases the guardians stated that so far as the applications for relief were concerned there was no material increase in the recent winter months as compared with the number in receipt of relief during the corresponding months of recent years. They were not then referring to the question as to whether there was distress amongst persons above the pauper class.

321. You told us also that with regard to Poplar, in comparison to previous years, the distress was not so great?—The letter that I read was the letter from the guardians themselves, and as far as I recollect that was the effect of the reply.

322. Yes, I have it here. I took it down at the time. The relief applied for was less than on former occasions?—Yes. I am not quite certain of the date of the letter. Changes have occurred in a comparatively few days, in some districts, with the continued frost.

323. I can give you the date; the date is February 15th?—Yes.

324. What I want to ask is this: There was no reference made to the great distress existing at the present time amongst the dockers, was there?—I read the letter itself.

325. I know the contents of that letter.—I have no other information beyond that. I read

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

all that the guardians stated in reply to the circular.

326. I will tell you exactly what it was. The guardians stated that the relief applied for was less this year than on previous occasions.—Yes, I see that the letter was as follows: "The letter has been referred by the guardians to a committee of their body for consideration, but whose report has not yet been received. In the meantime the guardians desire me to state that the applications for relief have been less in number than in previous years. There can, however, be no doubt that in consequence of the continued severity of the weather unusual distress prevails in this district, and will increase until milder weather sets in. Hundreds of men who usually find employment in the docks or wharves are unable to follow their occupation, and the position is made more difficult by the absolute stoppage of all outdoor work."

327. Now with regard to St. George's-in-the-East: You also told us that that compared favourably with other years?—Yes; that is so.

328. Has nothing come to your knowledge with regard to the great distress existing among riverside men, and men connected with the sugar trade in St George's?—I have no doubt that there is considerable distress there amongst certain classes, as there must have been throughout London, but so far as the guardians are concerned, if I remember rightly, they stated that there was no very exceptional pressure upon them; and they also said that they were practically only granting relief in the workhouse—that is to say, that they were not giving outdoor relief at all.

329. Not any outdoor relief?—I should gather from their letter that that practically was the case; but in St. George's-in-the-East there are charity agencies at work. On the 18th February our inspector told us that there were in the two relief districts 20 persons in receipt of outdoor relief, and in the corresponding week of 1894, 24; that there are charitable and other agencies in the parish.

Mr. *John Burns.*

330. What kind of charities do you know?—The Charity Organization Society for one, "all cases referred to which by the guardians are undertaken by Mr. Crowder, the vice-chairman of the board. A ritualistic mission and sisterhood at the hostel adjoining the clerk's office, members of which visit and distribute relief in money, and tickets for fuel and food (The Rev. Mr. Warrington, Director). The Wesleyan East End Mission (Rev. P. Thompson), Cable Street, distributes fuel and food. Christchurch offertory, Watling Street, (Rev. Mr. Dimsdale), soup kitchen. St. John's, Grove Street (Rev. C. Bennett), soup kitchen. St. George's and Wapping Philanthropic Society, of which Mr. Barnes, relieving officer, is a member, issues tickets for food and coal during the winter months. The Rothschild kitchen, Devonshire Square, for indigent jews," and so on.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

331. These patriotic relief funds I believe established in St. George's are not solely applied

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

to that one district?—The Jewish Board of Guardians would afford relief outside that particular parish.

332. Yes, I am coming to that. I want to take other localities as well afterwards?—Then in the case of the Charity Organisation Society it would be a mere branch; but I should think that some of the other agencies are very much limited to the particular parish.

333. Then it is by these private contributions that the distress is reduced almost to a minimum?—I could hardly say that. All that I can say is that the guardians say that they have no material increase in the number of applications for relief.

Mr. *Jackson.*

334. "In the number of applications"—you put it as high as that, do you?—Yes, if I remember rightly.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

335. "Compare favourably with other years," you say?—The guardians say they do not "contemplate that any exceptional arrangements will be necessary to be made," and "that up to the present time the only slight increase has been in outdoor medical orders, which has been caused by the Jewish authorities withdrawing their medical officers attending on outdoor cases."

Mr. *Jackson.*

336. Well, that is relief given rather than applications, is it not?—Perhaps I was wrong in referring to applications.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

337. Going from St. George's to Mile End there is a totally different state of affairs. There the distress is very acute?—Yes, the clerk of the guardians used a very strong expression as to the distress. But if I remember rightly—so far as the relief is concerned—there was no very large increase in the number of cases on the relieving officer's books.

Mr. *Jackson.*

338. Is this Mile End?—This is Mile End—on the 7th February—the statement showed a total number of cases of 194 against 183 in the corresponding week in the last year. The Clerk says: "I fear, however, that these statistics give but a faint idea of the privation and misery which is being experienced at the present time, and which private and organised philanthropy is doing much to mitigate."

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

339. Then you mentioned in your report that the distress in Stepney was caused mainly by the strikes?—"The influx of tramps taking up their abode at the free shelter, Medland Hall," was first referred to. It was then said that "a considerable amount of distress existing at the present time is variously stated to be owing to depression of trade and slackness of work (attributed by some

to

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

to the constantly recurring strikes, and the inclemency of the weather. How far these causes may yet render necessary some exceptional arrangements for meeting destitution the guardians are unable to forecast."

340. Can you tell the Committee whether all these applicants for relief in the East End of London are really inhabitants of the East End of London?—I should expect that they were. The guardians have no duty to give relief except to persons who are in their district.

341. Who are paying rates?—No, not paying rates. If a man is destitute in any parish, even if he may have slept in another parish the previous night, he is entitled to have relief from the officers of that parish.

Mr. *John Burns.*

342. For one night; is not that so, or for how long?—If the man is destitute, wherever he may have slept the previous night, he is entitled to have relief if he requires it.

343. But generally it is confined to two nights, is it not?—Very likely the officers may arrange so, but the rule is to relieve where the destitution occurs.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

344. I think the most alarming report you have submitted to the Committee is that of St. Olave's, where the distress seems to have gone up by leaps and bounds?—Yes, that shows by far the largest increase as compared with the numbers in the corresponding period of last year.

345. And all the moneys expended in the relief of this very large number have to be levied on the rates—is it not so?—So far as the money given in relief is concerned, that will fall upon the rates of the particular union; but the large number of cases applying for relief has in the end meant a very large addition to the staff employed by the guardians. They have now a very considerable staff for making inquiries into cases, and the Board encourage in every way the obtaining of an efficient staff for that purpose. They have also now a considerable number of persons who are exercising some supervision over the persons employed, or attempting to do so. The salaries of those officers are not borne by the union, but when sanctioned by the Board are a charge upon the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund.

346. The salaries of those extra officers employed are charged to the Metropolitan Poor Fund?—Yes, in the case of any officer whose appointment has been sanctioned by the Board the salary is thus chargeable.

347. Have the guardians in any instance employed an extra officer to examine all these cases of relief to ascertain whether they are *bonâ fide* and unpreventable?—I should think that St. Olave's has now a very considerable staff of visiting officers devoting their time to enquiries as to cases.

348. As to cases only?—Yes.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

349. Can you tell the Committee whether in any case that you may know, in carrying out these relief works other than stone breaking, they have ever shown, I will not say a profit, but I will say any case in which they have ever paid anything over the expenditure involved?—I quite admit that in a time of severe frost there is a difficulty. You cannot get certain kinds of labour done at the same cost then as you would at other periods, in fact, I believe that the guardians of West Ham told us that the cost of the breakage of tools during the frost was equal to the value of the work done.

350. The cost of the breakage of tools?—In some cases that was so, when the frost was so hard.

351. Is it not a fact that gentlemen composing the guardians of the Mile End Old Town do not personally make enquiries as to the fitness of those people who apply for relief?—The relieving officers would do so.

352. Yes; but I do not mean the relieving officers.—No; I do not think that the guardians would make the enquiries.

353. How do they arrive, then, at the truth of these applications?—They have their own officers, who are required to visit at the homes of the people, and to make a report as to the applications. There is an application and report book, in which under a number of headings a large number of particulars have to be entered as to the circumstances of each case.

354. Now, as to stone breaking; I suppose there is a limit to stone breaking?—I have no doubt there would be if the frost was to continue long.

355. I mean in consideration of the great advance of wood paving. You have told us in your statement that there were a great many cases of distress in South Wales. Will you be good enough to say whether the distress at the present moment is greater than it was while the McKinley tariff was in vogue?—I think that Mr. Llewellyn Smith would be better able to answer questions as to that.

356. I should like to ask whether it is not a fact that in agricultural districts farming is in such a deplorable condition that the farm labourers are leaving those districts and going into the large towns in very great numbers; more so than usual?—I do not think I could give an answer to that question, which would be of very much value.

Mr. *John Wilson* (*Durham*).

357. I have only one question to ask; it is anent the report received from the Auckland Union of Durham; I would like to ask whether this statement here (question No. 9) contains the whole of that report. There is no mention of 800 men out of employment there receiving 10*s.* a week from their union, is there?—No; I will read the letter, it is very short: "In reply to your letter of the 24th January last, I have been instructed by the board of guardians of this union to state that there has not been during the recent

Mr. *John Wilson* (*Durham*)—continued.

recent winter months any material increase in the number of applications for relief. The guardians are not anticipating any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal, and they do not contemplate that any exceptional arrangements will be necessary. The board do not think there is any distress of an exceptional character amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief."

358. There is no mention there of men being discharged from their employment for want of trade, and being paid 10s. a week by the union they belong to and keeping off the rates?—No, there is no reference to that in the letter.

Mr. *Jackson.*

359. Does that apply to the same district?—Yes, the Auckland Union.

Mr. *John Wilson* (*Durham*).

360. Have you the inspector's report for Durham? Can you tell the Committee whether that mentions anything of this?—I cannot put my hand upon that report at the present moment.

Thursday, 21*st February* 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Acland.
Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. Billson.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.
Mr. Crean.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Mather.
Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. John Wilson (Durham).
Mr. John Wilson (Govan).
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN IN THE CHAIR.

The *Chairman* handed in the following letter:—

"Office of the Secretary for Scotland,
"Whitehall, S.W.
"20 February 1895.

"Sir,—With reference to your letter of the 19th instant, I am directed by the Secretary for Scotland to state, for the information of the Select Committee on the Unemployed, that the Local Government Board in Edinburgh are issuing a circular to all Municipal and Parochial authorities in compliance with the request of the Committee, and that since November they have kept the Secretary for Scotland informed, by a series of full reports, of the state of the labour market and unemployed in all the centres of population in Scotland, and of the extent of distress. These reports will be submitted to the Committee if desired.

"I am, Sir,
"Your obedient Servant,
"*Colin Scott Moncrieff.*

"R. Dickinson, Esq.,
"House of Commons."

Sir HUGH OWEN, K.C.B., re-called; and further Examined.

Chairman.

361. I UNDERSTAND that you have received some further replies since we adjourned yesterday?—Yes; we have received this morning about 250 replies to the circular that was issued in obedience to the request of the Committee. The question is, what course the Committee would desire should be adopted with regard to them. If it would be any convenience to the Committee, of course our Department would put them in form for the printer. I do not mean that the Department should summarise the replies, because it is of importance, I think, that the Committee should themselves see precisely what the authorities state. There may be considerable difference of opinion as to whether a summary is correctly prepared or not; and throughout I have rather studiously avoided attempting to give any statement of my own conclusions from the communications which the Board have received, preferring to put before the Committee all the information the Board have, leaving the Committee to form their own opinion.

362. You have, in fact, avoided presenting anything like an average opinion drawn from the replies. You desire the Committee to form an opinion from the cases themselves. In this instance, what you would propose, as I understand, would be to print a brief analysis of the replies from each place *nominatim*?—I should myself prefer printing the replies, avoiding all unnecessary verbiage.

Chairman—continued.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

363. That is printing the actual text of the reply?—Yes, dividing the cases into five classes, namely, County Boroughs, Boroughs other than County Boroughs, Urban Districts other than Boroughs, Rural Districts, and the Metropolis.

Chairman.

364. That is to say the papers containing those replies should, avoiding, as you say, all verbiage, be printed and circulated to members of the Committee?—Yes, simply avoiding verbiage. There are four questions contained in the letter which was issued by the Board, and the replies would be given under each of those heads, not in tabular form, but giving the words of the answer except where there is mere verbiage, such as an acknowledgment of the letter, and so on.

Mr. *Mather.*

365. Of course, giving any general observations on the question contained in the replies?—I should propose to follow, as closely as possible, the words of the answers.

Chairman.

366. Then will you have that done? —Yes.

Mr. *Bolton.*

367. It would be useful if the population of each place and the rateable value could be stated?—We should have no difficulty in giving the population according to the census of 1891, except in those cases where there have been alterations of areas since that time; and generally, except where there have been alterations of area, we could give the rateable value of the district. The name of the informant in each case would be given. I think we have issued the circular to about 1,800 districts. Is it the desire of the Committee that the answers should be printed from day to day as they come in?

Chairman.

368. Yes, I think so?—That does not admit of very convenient arrangement; but we can give each day's replies in alphabetical order under the divisions which I have mentioned.

369. An index could be made afterwards, if necessary, saying on which day each place has given its answer?—Certainly.

Mr. *Crean.*

370. Have you confined the inquiries which you have been making lately to England and Wales? —The Local Government Board have no jurisdiction in Ireland. Our inquiries have not extended either to Ireland or Scotland, but simply England and Wales.

371. Have you had indirect communication with similar Boards in Ireland and Scotland?—We have had no communication at all as regards Scotland or Ireland, either with the local authorities or with the Government Departments.

372. Then we shall have to deal direct with them if we are to deal with those two countries? —That would be so; we should have no information with regard to Scotland or Ireland.

373. I noticed you said that the Poor Law unions here have ample powers to deal with the question of relief?—That is my view.

374. In many instances replies have come to you, have they not, where works have been opened and labourers from neighbouring unions or districts have flooded in, and compelled the guardians of the district to limit the labour to those who had for a certain time lived in their own union; is that so?—I referred to one case, the case of the St. Olave's Union, where there was reason to suppose that a large number of persons came from other districts, and where the guardians in consequence passed a resolution to the effect that relief in the stoneyard would not be given to those living in common lodging houses, or who had not resided in the parish for a certain period; but the fact of the guardians passing that resolution would not in any way relieve them of their responsibility as regards giving relief to destitute persons within their district.

Mr. *Crean*—continued.

375. Do you not think that the influx of these external out of work men, as I may call them, was solely owing to the apathy of the districts from which they came, or of the guardians in those districts who refused to open relief works? —I should hardly say that there was apathy on the part of the guardians of the other districts, but I may say this, that if a stone-yard was opened, and there was an offer of 3*s.* 6*d.* per day, and there were practically but few inquiries as to the necessities of the persons who applied, and very little supervision as to the amount of work done, I do not think there is any district in London which would not at any time of the year obtain a large number of applicants for relief on those terms.

376. Is it not evident from the reports of many of the guardians or their officers that very little inquiry has been made as to the distress other than real pauper distress?—As regards pauper distress, I think the replies of the guardians that I have read are based on actual facts and figures absolutely within their own knowledge with reference to the work which they themselves are doing. But, on the other hand, when they express an opinion as to the extent to which there is distress amongst persons of a class above the pauper class, undoubtedly they are merely relying upon the general impressions of the relieving officers and of the guardians personally. I should expect in no case has there been any methodical attempt, by census or otherwise, to obtain an actual statement of the number of unemployed, and I doubt whether, if the attempt had been made, very accurate information could have been obtained.

377. I understand that out of the 70 replies you have had, out of the 90 unions you sent to, 50 report favourably?—The replies from the 50 unions to which I referred had reference to the question as to whether there was a material increase in the number of persons applying to the guardians for relief as compared with the numbers in previous winters of recent years.

378. May I ask whether the evidence given to you by the guardians is confined solely to the pauper relief in the several districts, or whether they have extended their investigations to the larger area of the distress which we are here particularly to deal with, that is among the unemployed who have not sought relief?—The circular letter which the Board addressed to the boards of guardians, and which I read to the Committee, refers to two distinct questions: first, as to whether there has been in the winter months a material increase in the number of persons in receipt of relief from the guardians as compared with the numbers in the winter months of previous years; whether the guardians were anticipating any difficulty in dealing with the destitution for which they have to provide; and whether they were contemplating making any exceptional arrangements for that purpose. That was one series of questions, having reference only to the persons who were coming directly within the cognisance of the guardians as being relieved by them. The second branch of the question was whether, among persons above the pauper class, there was exceptional distress; if so, among what classes has that distress chiefly occurred, and how far the distress at the

Mr. *Crean*—continued.

the time was exceptional. As regards the first series of questions the guardians could speak with absolute accuracy, because all the facts and figures were within their own knowledge. As to the second, in some cases the guardians stated that they had not the means of forming an accurate opinion; in others they gave the general conclusions at which they had arrived. I may add that as regards the letters which we received in each case I mentioned the date when the communication was addressed to the Board, because it is quite certain that in many unions, in consequence of the continued frost, there was a considerable change of circumstances after the date when these letters were addressed to the Department.

379. Then we may assume that the replies from the several boards give a fairly accurate account of the chronic pauperism of the districts from which you have received those replies?—In answering the question as to the number of paupers at the periods referred to, I do not think that the guardians would consider that they were expressing an opinion on the question as to what the chronic pauperism of their district might be.

380. What I mean is the pauperism of this year as compared with any former year—say, for instance, last year?—As regards pauperism, we have no difficulty in giving the information from the returns that are made to us each week. We have the actual figures as regards pauperism, but the element of doubt comes in as to the class who are not paupers, but who may be out of employment.

381. From your evidence, then, I understand the guardians, as they exist, have no accurate means of ascertaining the exact distress or poverty outside the limit of real pauperism?—Clearly they have not the means of expressing such an opinion as could be based upon a census so conducted as to secure a satisfactory return; but my own impression would be (as I mentioned previously) that as the relieving officers are constantly among the poor they can form a fair general conclusion of what the condition of those immediately above the class with whom they are continually coming in contact may be. When one remembers how boards of guardians are constituted, and how many gentlemen on the board are themselves interested in commercial undertakings and in businesses of different kinds, it is clear that they themselves have the means of forming something like an accurate general opinion on the subject; but I think the statements in these letters can only be regarded as shewing their views on the question of the unemployed above the pauper class.

382. Have you in your Department any means of checking the reports you receive from the several unions by inspectors or otherwise?—We have no means of checking those reports. The information that the inspectors themselves would obtain would be information furnished by those carrying on the administration of relief.

383. Is it the habit here, as in Ireland, to apply to the police for particular information as to distress other than poor relief distress?—No, that course has never been adopted in England, but so far as regards any information that a

Mr. *Crean*—continued.

Government department has, beyond that which I have laid before the Committee, as to the persons above the pauper class who are unemployed, the Labour Department of the Board of Trade would be able to give much better information than I could.

384. Is it the general rule with boards of guardians to immediately apply for funds to start relief works where distress appears in their district, or do they feel apathetic in consequence of the short hours of labour and the likelihood of the works costing a good deal more than they would under more favourable circumstances?—The boards of guardians in England, as regards destitution, from whatever cause it may arise or amongst whatever class it prevails, have but one duty, and that is the duty of relieving those who apply to them and of whose destitution they are satisfied; and for the purpose of that relief they are empowered to levy whatever funds are required, those funds being raised by the poor rate. They have themselves nothing to do with the carrying out of public works; the only work that they give is a task of work simply as a test of the destitution of the persons applying to them.

385. Do they ever seek out for this destitution, or do they wait until it comes to their door, or do they leave to the charitable institutions the active work of seeking reticent poor people who could not and would not actually go to the union house, or to the officers, to seek relief from them?—The duty of the guardians primarily is to deal with the applications which are made to them for relief. The Department would, however, say that if from any source a relieving officer had information as to a particular person being destitute the relieving officer ought to give his attention to the case; but it has not been regarded as the duty of the guardians or the relieving officers to be making a sort of house-to-house visitation with a view to ascertaining whether there were any persons there who desired to obtain relief at the cost of the rates.

386. Having regard to facts that have come under the notice of many of us, that men who are heads of large families have actually died rather than make direct application to the union themselves, may I ask you whether your experience of the working of the Poor Relief Act in this country here would lead you to the belief that it would be advantageous in periods of extreme distress arising from want of work to have a circular issued to the several boards of guardians and other kindred authorities asking them to make direct enquiry, and if possible give relief in cases where this relief would be advantageously distributed, and where the people would not themselves make direct application?—My own personal view (I can express nothing more) is that it would be inexpedient to adopt the course referred to.

Chairman.

387. You see at least great objections to it?—Yes, I very much doubt whether it is the duty of the guardians to be making a house-to-house visitation and enquiring whether there is anyone there who requires relief.

Chairman—continued.

relief. I think that it may be usually expected that those who are in such circumstances of need as to urgently require relief would make application for it; but at the same time I quite realise that there are cases, and I am not prepared to say that there are not many cases, where persons are in extreme destitution and conceal the facts, concealing them even from the persons living in the same house; but those persons are the very last who would admit the fact of their need, assuming that there were any such house-to-house inquiry as is suggested. It has happened in cases where inquests are held that the persons living in the same house had no idea that the deceased had been going through the privation that the evidence showed had been the case. Those persons whose case the honourable Member has most in his mind would, I believe, be most likely to deny that there was necessity for relief if such an application were made.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

388. I understand that you have expressed the opinion that boards of guardians have no power to relieve distress except it flow from acute destitution, and that the vestries and other sanitary authorities are not under any compulsion to find work for persons out of employment, anything they do being a mere act of grace on their part to help those who are destitute from being out of work; is that correct?—It is my view that the boards of guardians have only the duty of relieving destitution; I am speaking now simply of their statutory duty; and that, as regards local authorities and the execution of works, they are under no statutory obligation to carry out works at a particular season when there may be a great dearth of employment. The statute confers upon them certain powers as regards works of different kinds, and it is in their discretion as to the time when those particular works should be executed.

389. Do you know whether there is any department which has imposed upon it the duty of finding employment for those who are unemployed, and who but for the fact that they are involuntarily unemployed would not be in the ranks of the destitute?—If the question is whether there is any department which has the absolute duty of finding employment, when there is a scarcity of employment, my answer is that there is no such department.

390. Has your Department, or have you yourself as its Permanent Secretary, ever considered whether it would not be a desirable thing that there should be such a department?—Does the honourable Member mean a department of the State charged with the duty of finding employment for persons of all classes at any time when there is slackness of work?

391. Yes, that is my question?—My own view is that it would be impracticable. I am only stating my own opinion.

392. Has your Department ever considered the question?—I think I may say that there is no scheme for securing such a result that has been considered by the Department.

Chairman.

393. It would not fall within the ordinary functions of your Department to suggest the creation of another department, a supplementary department, for purposes which did not come within the range of your own duty?—No; it would not; and, of course, I can only speak of the department with which I am connected.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

394. I understand it is the case in the administration of the Poor Law to administer it on very strict lines, because it is said that those who are once relieved are apt to be demoralised thereby and to come again more readily upon the rates?—Of course nothing would be easier than for boards of guardians to multiply the number of persons in receipt of out-relief to any extent; but it requires great wisdom on the part of guardians so to administer relief as to provide for the necessities of those who are really necessitous, and, at the same time, to offer no undue inducement to persons, instead of maintaining their independence, to become chargeable on the rates, and in that way to become a burden upon others; because it is to be remembered that the cost of relief is defrayed out of the poor rates, and the poor rates are not paid merely by the wealthy or the well-to-do, but also by a large number of persons of a class very little above many of those who are coming upon the rates for assistance.

395. May I ask as a matter of opinion (because your position as Permanent Secretary to the Local Government Board makes your opinion so valuable), supposing it to be possible to establish works which would prevent people coming upon the rates who are out of employment, would that be desirable if it were possible?—I think that that is a question which must be answered with a great deal in the way of qualification. The whole question would have to be considered, and if it were found to be possible, then the question would arise whether it would be expedient or wise in the interests of the working classes, and one has to consider not only the ordinary working class, but such persons as an honourable Member referred to yesterday, who often suffer distress, persons of the class of clerks, for instance; are they all to be provided with employment? So much must depend upon the scheme as to whether it is desirable or not. Then you must consider how far such a scheme would be an advantage to the working classes themselves, whether you would not be taking away from them those inducements which they have now to maintain their independence; whether you would not be likely to be offering inducements which might lead to the loss of that self-respect which now so largely prevails amongst the working class, and which makes them so unwilling to apply to boards of guardians for relief, and thus become a burden upon others. You must, I think, consider what are likely to be the disadvantages of such a scheme, even if it were possible.

396. Supposing the only option of the working man is to starve or to go upon the rates for relief, would it not tend in your opinion to preserve his integrity and manhood better if work were offered to him instead of the only option being to accept relief from the rates?—As regards

Mr. *Keir-Hardie*—continued.

gards the option of starving or working it must be remembered that no man need starve; the guardians have the duty and the means of giving relief, and I think the guardians have not failed in that duty. Then, as regards giving employment, there is the question how you can give employment to the large number of persons out of employment in consequence of the scarcity of work without running a very great risk of depriving of employment some of those who are already at work.

397. There is just one more question I want to ask at this stage. In reply to a question put in the House of Commons, Mr. Fowler, who was then President of the Local Government Board, said, "The law officers of the Crown have advised that boards of guardians have power to purchase or rent land not exceeding 50 acres in the whole, and to open workshops for setting destitute able-bodied persons to work, and to pay such persons reasonable wages for their labour." Is that view still held at the Local Government Board?—The facts are these. An Act passed in the 43rd of Elizabeth (1601) provides that the overseers of the poor of each parish "shall take order from time to time by and with the consent of two or more justices of the peace for setting to work the children of all such whose parents shall not by the said churchwardens and overseers or the greater part of them be thought able to keep and maintain their children; and also for setting to work all such persons married or unmarried having no means to maintain them and use no ordinary or daily trade of life to get their living by; and also to raise by taxation a convenient stock of flax, hemp, thread, iron and other necessary ware and stuff to set the poor on work." Then there was an Act passed in 1819—the 59th George III., chapter 12—which contains this provision in section 12: "Whereas by an Act passed in the 43rd year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth the churchwardens and overseers of the poor are directed to set to work certain persons therein described; and whereas by the laws now in force sufficient powers are not given to the churchwardens and overseers to enable them to keep such persons fully and constantly employed. Be it further enacted that it shall be lawful for the churchwardens and overseers of the poor of any parish, with the consent of the inhabitants thereof in vestry assembled, to take into their hands any land or ground which shall belong to such parish or to the churchwardens and overseers of the poor of such parish, or to the poor thereof, or to purchase or to hire and take on lease for and on account of the parish, any suitable portion or portions of land within or near to such parish, not exceeding 20 acres in the whole; and to employ and set to work in the cultivation of such land on account of the parish, any such persons as by law they are directed to set to work, and to pay to such of the poor persons so employed as shall not be supported by the parish, reasonable wages for their work; and the poor persons so employed shall have such and the like remedies for the recovery of their wages, and shall be subject to such and the like punishment for misbehaviour in their employment as other labourers in husbandry are by law entitled and subjected to."

Mr. *Keir-Hardie*—continued.

That Act was extended by the 1st and 2nd William IV., chapter 42, which increased the maximum of 20 acres in the whole to 50 acres. As I have said, the one Act was passed in 1601 and the other in 1819. It is not easy to say precisely to what extent those sections as regards lands were carried out by the overseers, but in the report of the Poor Law Commissioners in 1834 there occurs this statement: "It appears from the Parliamentary Returns that payment for work is the most unusual form in which relief is administered. The poor rate returns for the year ending 25th March 1832 state that out of 7,036,968*l.* expended in that year for the relief of the poor, less than 354,000*l.*, or scarcely more than one-twentieth, was paid for work, including work on the roads and in the workhouses." The powers of the overseers as regards relief by the Act of 1834 were transferred to the guardians; and in consequence of questions which were raised, the opinion of the law officers was obtained as to whether these provisions were still operative. They were absolutely obsolete so far as giving effect to them was concerned, but there was the fact that they had not actually been repealed, and were therefore still on the Statute Book. The law officers advised that the effect of the Act of 1834 was to transfer to the guardians the powers of the overseers under the Act of Elizabeth; that, although the powers in question are no doubt obsolete in the sense that they have not for a considerable period been used, they are effective existing powers available for use if required; that these powers are exercisable subject to the control of the Local Government Board; and that, as employment is a form of relief, the provisions of the Act of 1834 and the other statutes as to poor relief extend to the relief which is given in this way. With regard to setting the poor to work at wages on land acquired under 59 George III., cap. 12, section 12, and 1 and 2 William IV., cap. 42, the law officers were of opinion that the powers of the overseers had passed to the guardians, and that the guardians can exercise those powers to the extent limited by the Acts in respect of each parish in the union; such exercise being subject to the general control of the Local Government Board in the direction of reducing, not increasing, the average to be taken for each parish.

Chairman.

398. Have the powers ever been exercised?—Not so far as I am aware of since the Act of 1834 was passed.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

399. At all events, the result is that the guardians have these powers subject to the control of the Local Government Board if they care to exercise them?—Those provisions continue on the statute book, and I think in two or three cases last year, and in the case of Croydon this year, we have received communications from boards of guardians asking whether the board would sanction schemes as regards land in this way. Mr. Fowler, when the question was referred to in the House on the occasion to which the honourable

Mr. *Keir-Hardie*—continued.

Member alludes, referred to the fact that these powers had not been exercised, and that the change would be so important a one that it might be a question whether Parliamentary sanction should not be obtained before they were exercised. At the same time, the Board in the cases I have referred to have written to the guardians stating that if any definite scheme, with the details of the arrangements necessary for giving effect to it, were proposed, it would be considered by the Board; but I think I should say that the scheme would be considered not only on its merits, but as to how far it would be right that such a material departure from what has been the practice for so many years should be adopted without Parliamentary sanction.

400. Would you tell us whether your Department has had any application from a number of different unions for power to combine to do jointly that which each of the unions may do separately, and, if so, with what result?—I am not quite sure whether the honourable Member is referring to combination for giving effect to those provisions to which I have referred.

401. Practically that is what it amounts to?—I think I may answer that we have not had applications from boards of guardians submitting any such scheme; but there was a conference in the early part of this year that was attended by a certain number of guardians. It was held at Poplar, I think, and certain resolutions were passed. The first conference was held on the 2nd November, 1894, the following unions and parishes being represented:—Bethnal Green, Fulham, Hackney, Holborn, Kensington, Lambeth, Mile End, Poplar, Strand, Stepney, and Wandsworth and Clapham. The first resolution was "That this conference respectfully requests the President of the Local Government Board to at once use the powers vested in him to form the several unions and parishes of the Metropolis and West Ham into one district, to be called the London Unemployed District; and that he be urged to obtain, by a short Bill, certain discretionary powers by which the said district would deal with the *bonâ fide* unemployed without detriment to their right of citizenship." The next resolution was "That such district be under the direction of a board of management, consisting of representatives from the component boards of guardians, and that all persons qualified to be elected as guardians be eligible for election as members of such board." Then there was an adjourned meeting at which representatives of eight unions were present, viz: Bethnal Green, Fulham, Hackney, Lambeth, Mile End, Poplar, Stepney, and Wandsworth and Clapham. The resolutions passed were: "That this conference is further of opinion that the managers of the proposed district when formed should at once take in hand the question of establishing farms near London, and the establishment of workshops for the manufacture of goods for the consumption of those employed on the farm and in the workshops. That powers of detention be vested in such district board, and that provision be made for dealing with married as well as single persons. That as the initial cost of carrying out on an adequate scale any such proposals would of necessity be very heavy, the President of the

Mr. *Keir-Hardie*—continued.

Local Government Board be asked to sanction the raising by loan of a sufficient sum to cover all initial expenses." The resolution as to establishing farms and workshops for the manufacture of goods, it appears from a note, "was carried by ten votes to four, the representatives from Fulham and Lambeth voting against it." I know of no other case besides that.

402. Have you got the reply that was sent from the Local Government Board?—Yes; but I may say we received a letter from the parish of Paddington not concurring in the proposals, and there was also a letter from the Charity Organization Society, in which they stated they would like to be heard upon the subject before any consent to such a scheme was given.

Chairman.

403. To whom was your reply addressed?—Our reply was addressed to Mr. William Crooks, who presided at the conference as chairman.

Mr. *Bartley.*

404. Was that conference attended by official representatives of the guardians, or was it got up by individual members?—It is referred to in this printed statement as a "Conference of delegates from Metropolitan Boards of Guardians," but whether all the boards of guardians were invited to send delegates, or how many were present, or what selection was made, I do not know. I observe that eight out of the 30 unions and parishes were represented when the later resolutions were passed, and 11 when the earlier ones were passed.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

405. Will you give us the reply of the Board?—The letter written in reply to that communication is this—it is dated the 15th January this year,—"I am directed by the Local Government Board to advert to your letter forwarding for their information copies of the resolutions passed at a conference of representatives of boards of guardians of certain unions and parishes in the Metropolis. The scheme contemplated by the resolutions, as the Board understand, is that a District to be called the London Unemployed District should be constituted by them, such district to include the several unions and parishes in the metropolis and the West Ham union; that a board of management should be elected for the district, and that the managers should undertake the establishment of farms near London, and of workshops for the manufacture of goods for the consumption of those employed on the farms and in the workshops, provision being made for dealing with married as well as single persons, and the unemployed being dealt with without detriment to their right of citizenship. The Board have had the subject under their consideration, and they direct me to state that they are advised that the existing law does not authorise them to constitute the district suggested, and that they are unable to hold out any expectation that they would propose legislation for the purpose of giving effect to the scheme referred to. The Board may at the same time state that if the guardians of any union should

Mr. *Keir-Hardie*—continued.

should determine on a scheme for providing land with a view to its being used so that work thereon may afford a test of the necessities of persons who apply to them on the ground of their being unemployed, and inform the Board fully of their proposals and of the details of the arrangements which they contemplate, the Board will give the matter their careful consideration.

Mr. *Benn.*

406. You gave us the returns of pauperism in the Metropolis; can you give any explanation of the startling figures which come from Camberwell and St. Olave's?—The figures as to St. Olave's are certainly startling. I have the figures during previous periods of frost, and the increase is very remarkable.

407. Would you take those figures as indicating that greater distress prevails in the South of London than in the East?—I am afraid I could not go further than stating what the returns themselves show. I will give first the number as to St. Olave's. The number in receipt of relief in the first week of February this year in St. Olave's, taking the outdoor poor only, was 9,933. Taking 1887–88, when the winter was a severe one, and taking the week ending the 3rd March 1888, when metropolitan pauperism was at its height, the total number of adults and children in receipt of outdoor relief in St. Olave's was 2,517; and in the winter of 1890–91 (a prolonged period of frost), in the week ending the 24th January, when the numbers for the metropolis were highest, the total number of outdoor poor, adults and children, was 2,741; so that the numbers have gone up from 2,517 to 9,933, comparing 1888 with 1895, and from 2,741 to 9,933, comparing 1891 with February this year.

408. Is it not the fact that the practice of guardians with regard to outdoor relief varies very much in different parts of London?—No doubt, as the honourable Member knows very well, in St. George's-in-the-East (as was stated in the communication which I read to the Committee) practically no outdoor relief is given.

409. Then may I take it that these figures are not reliable as regards the distress in various parts of London?—I think they are absolutely reliable as to the number of persons in receipt of relief from the guardians.

410. Yes, but seeing that one practice obtains in St. George's-in-the-East and an entirely different practice obtains in Camberwell and St. Olave's, the figures would be misleading, would they not, if they are taken as an indication of general distress. I think you will be able to tell the Committee that the practice in Camberwell and St. Olave's amounts to this: that those who apply can have relief almost without inquiry or any of the tests which prevail in St. George's-in-the-East?—I believe a witness is coming from St. Olave's, and if I might make a suggestion, he should be examined as to how they have been relieving the distress there, as to what they did during the period the stone-yard was open, with a view of ascertaining the facts as to the destitution of the persons who applied, and whether enquiries were made at the homes of those people either before or immediately afterwards as the regulations require, and again as to what practically was the supervision of those who were set to work, and how much work was done by them. I have seen some very curious statements as to the average amount of stone broken by the men in the earlier days of the yard being open. As I said before, a board of guardians has not the least difficulty in increasing the outdoor poor to any extent.

Mr. *Benn*—continued.

411. You gave us the figure of 1,051 as representing the increase in the eastern part of London, comparing 1895 with 1894?—Yes, the eastern division.

412. Do you take that as the measure of distress in the East-end?—It is very difficult to express a general opinion. What I would say as regards St. George's-in-the-East, for instance, is that one very well knows that the guardians have for years carried out the Poor Law very strictly; but, on the other hand, they have been working charitable organisations in connection with the Poor Law there. The chairman of the board of guardians has taken an immense amount of interest in the work; he believes he is rendering good service in not giving out-relief except under very special circumstances, and he has done all that he could (and that has been a great deal) in the way of handing over to charitable organisations cases where, if it were not for the maintenance of strict principle, he would have given outdoor relief.

413. His work being mainly through the Charity Organization Society?—There are other societies also; there are pension societies. I remember in some evidence that he gave he showed there is not merely assistance given just for tiding over a week or two, but making some permanent provision for the people, and I believe that, in a considerable number of cases, pensions have been given to persons for the remainder of their days.

414. Are you aware that the test in that district of the Charity Organization Society is that the man must first go into the workhouse?—No, I do not know that; and, if I may say so, I should doubt it from the evidence that I have seen.

Chairman.

415. Do you know whether the funds of these charitable societies in St. George's in the East are purely voluntary in their nature?—They are purely voluntary in their nature, but they are worked in St. George's-in-the-East to a greater extent probably than elsewhere in connection with the administration of relief—that is to say, there is an understanding between the guardians and those interested in the charities that the charities will take the hard cases—I mean by the hard cases, cases where the guardians would desire that the people should not come upon the rates at all.

Mr. *Benn.*

416. Have you observed that certain districts of London, judging by the returns of pauperism, are getting poorer and others are getting richer?—No, I could not say that that was the case. I should like to go behind the figures and ask whether the administration of the relief is altering.

Mr. *Benn*—continued.

417. Have you noticed that the number of able-bodied paupers indoor and outdoor in the five unions of the Tower Hamlets has doubled since 1890. I take the figures from "Pauperism, Return B." I may say the figures have nothing to do, or very little to do, with the frost, because they are made up on the 1st January and the 1st July in each year?—Do I understand the honourable Member to refer to the total number of able-bodied paupers?

418. I am referring to the total number of able-bodied, indoor and outdoor?—It must not be supposed, when the term "able-bodied" is used, that those persons are all in a condition to work. If I might take, for instance, the number who were returned as able-bodied in the receipt of out-door relief on the 1st January 1894, taking the males only, the total number was 18,097. Then if you classify them, 10,291 of that number were relieved on account of their own sickness, accident, or infirmity; 216 on account of sudden and urgent necessity; 4,609 on account of sickness, accident, or infirmity of some member of the family or a funeral; and out of the total of 18,097 there were 2,981 on account of want of work or other causes throughout the whole of England and Wales.

419. But whatever may be those conditions they were the same conditions in 1890 as in 1894, were they not?—The conditions would be the same.

420. I have taken the figures from the pauperism return for Mile End, St. George's, Poplar, and Whitechapel, and I notice that the population has very slightly increased, and that the figures of able-bodied in-door and out-door paupers with regard to those particular districts have doubled. Have you noticed that similar returns in St. George's West have considerably increased?—No, I have not; I have not the figures before me at the moment.

421. Then I will not trouble you further upon that point. You have told us that the guardians and local authorities have in your opinion all the necessary powers to meet exceptional distress?—They have, in my opinion, all the powers necessary to give relief to those who are destitute.

422. With regard to the clause in the Local Government circular urging upon local authorities to mature any scheme for works required for the district, supposing the district is too poor to incur further expenses, to what quarter do you think they should look for further assistance?—I think the honourable Member is referring to a circular in which the Board suggested that there were certain classes of persons whose independence it was very desirable to maintain, and that if possible they should be kept from becoming dependent upon others by becoming a charge upon the rates, and that in those cases where the local authorities could assist by undertaking works it was desirable that they should do so. Supposing, however, the local authority cannot do this, the guardians have their duty to perform. It would be unfortunate, no doubt, that those persons should have to apply for relief, but if they do apply for relief it is the duty of the guardians to relieve them, and they are able to give the necessary relief.

423. Is it not the fact that certain districts in London which most require street cleaning and road making have least funds for the purpose?—No doubt there is in many districts less expenditure on works of that kind than in others.

Mr. *Jackson.*

424. Is that work done by the guardians?—No.

Mr. *Benn.*

425. The circular urges that the guardians should co-operate with the local authority to carry out such work; and what I want to get at is this: is it not almost useless (I will not say a mockery) to suggest to a poor district, whose rates are already higher than many other richer districts, that it should proceed to incur further expense, without suggesting some method of assisting the district or without providing some funds for the district to meet such exceptional distress?—If the question is whether it is a mockery, I should say distinctly not. The co-operation referred to in that circular was this: that if the local authority were requiring works that ought to be undertaken and could undertake the works, there should, as far as possible, be co-operation between them and the guardians for one purpose, and one purpose only, and that was that the work should be given, as far as practicable, to persons not of the loafer class, but to persons who were really needing work, whose independence ought, if possible, to be maintained. The guardians could best suggest to the local authority those who could be recommended with that view, the guardians being left to deal with the residue. I cannot very well go into the question as to the extent of the means of different parishes in the East End, but it was quite recognised, and, indeed, it was the ground for passing a Bill of last year, the Equalisation of Rates Bill, which has the effect of distributing considerable sums among the poorer districts according to the necessities, those sums being paid to those local authorities who carry out works with the object that they should be better able to secure the street cleansing and improved sanitary condition which is so desirable. The net total that will be received by the different authorities under that Act during the year (one half year's payment only has as yet been made, and I am doubling it) will amount to 217,000*l.*

426. If further funds were required to meet this question of assisting the worthy unemployed you would rather recommend the extension of some such system as that?—Of course, in a question of this kind I can only express my own opinion, but if it means that the cost of out-relief is to be thrown upon the whole of the metropolis I can only say that I should myself regard any such proposal with very great regret. As I said before, there is no difficulty whatever in increasing out-door relief. With a certain class of voters a very free and liberal distribution of out-relief would be most popular. What is the check you can have upon expenditure of that kind unless the expenditure is to be borne by the authority that is responsible for distributing the money? You would have one district dipping into the pocket of the whole of London for the distribution of out-door relief, and for myself, expressing only my

Mr. *Benn*—continued.

my own opinion, I should fear that the results of any such scheme would be very grave. When the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund was established what was most carefully considered at that time was what items could be made a common charge with the least risk, and every item that was adopted for the purpose of this common fund had some ground in its favour in that view. Taking the different items which are now a charge upon the fund, the first is the maintenance of lunatics and insane poor. Perhaps it might be convenient if I give under each head the total cost borne by the whole of London by the operation of the common fund in respect of the items.

Mr. *Jackson.*

427. Will you tell us how the Common Fund is levied, just to make it clear; and, when you say "by the whole of London," is it by an equal rate over the whole of London?—It is in this way: there are certain items of expenditure which are a charge on this fund. Every union is entitled to be recouped from the fund its expenditure under each of those heads. Having obtained from all the authorities in London their expenditure under these heads for the half year, we find the total amount that has to be contributed for the purpose of raising that sum. Then you calculate what rate in the pound, over the whole of London, on the rateable value, will produce that sum. Having done that, we see what the contribution of a union is: and we see what sum it will receive from it. If the contribution is in excess of the sum to which it is entitled we call for the difference; if its contribution is less than its claim, then we pay the difference. It is on that principle that the fund is distributed. As I was saying, when the question as to the items which should be a charge on this fund was considered, there was a great desire, as far as possible, to secure some check upon the amount being unduly increased. The first item is the cost of the "maintenance of lunatics and insane poor;" that is, of lunatics in asylums. Well, a parish could not manage to be extravagant in that way; the lunatics could not be manufactured. The next charge is the "maintenance of paupers suffering from fever or small-pox." That seemed to be safe. I should say that the total amount under the first head is 237,000*l.*; under the second head 52,000*l.* The third is "medicine and medical and surgical appliances;" the fourth "salaries of officers;" but only such salaries as have been actually approved by the Local Government Board. The "rations of officers" is the next item. It was thought that the actual cost should not be repaid, but in order that there might be some security against extravagance repayment should only be made in accordance with a fixed scale prescribed by the Local Government Board. The officers are divided into two classes, and with respect to each a rate of charge is fixed, such rate being less than the actual cost. The next: "compensation for loss of office, etc." That is a small item, but the compensation is always awarded under orders of the board. The next: "registration fees." Those are fees in respect of registration of births and deaths. Those fees are fixed by

Mr. *Jackson*—continued.

statute—"Vaccination fees and expenses." The vaccination fees are under contracts which are approved by the board. Then "maintenance of pauper children." Then "expenses under the Houseless Poor Acts." Then the "maintenance of indoor paupers." As regards that item of expenditure, first of all it is to be borne in mind that a person will not go into the workhouse unless it is absolutely necessary that he should, and, then, not the whole cost is paid, but a sum at the rate of 5*d.* per head per day, which is less than the actual cost. The next: "education of outdoor pauper children"—a very small item; and the next: the "expenses of ambulances for persons suffering from infectious disease."

Mr. *Benn.*

428. The Common Poor Fund has only to do with indoor paupers practically?—It has; and I was rather desirous of pointing out that the principle on which the Common Poor Fund was established was that, as far as possible, no charges should be thrown on that fund with regard to which there was practically no control; but if it were proposed to throw upon that fund the cost of outdoor relief, as I said before, there could be no control over that expenditure; and any board of guardians could qualify for repayment from the common fund in respect of outdoor relief to any extent.

429. Then, as the fund stands, it affords no solution of the question which is before the Committee?—As the fund stands, it makes no provision for the payment of the cost of outdoor relief. The officers rendered necessary for the purposes of outdoor relief are, however, a charge on the fund to the extent of their salaries as sanctioned by the board.

430. Only one other question: I want to ask your opinion upon this point—whether seeing that certain districts of London have pushed out their populations into the poorer districts (take such a district as St. George's, Hanover Square, as compared with the district of St. George's-in-the-East-end), you do not think it is a fair proposal that the richer districts should be called upon to contribute to meet this exceptional distress which is largely due to congestion of population?—I think it must not be assumed that those richer districts are not now contributing, and contributing very largely.

431. I am familiar with the equalisation items?—But from that point of view it is very important; you refer to St. George's Hanover Square: They already pay in respect of the Common Poor Fund 41,000*l.* to the poorer parishes.

432. Yes; but that does not meet the present question?—They pay in respect of the indoor pauper grant 11,000*l.*, and their contributions to the Equalisation Fund amount to 41,000*l.*,—a total of 93,000*l.*

Mr. *John Burns.*

433. Is that a second 41,000*l.*—you said 41,000*l.*?—A second 41,000*l.* I should say that is the Equalisation Fund, which goes to the local authorities and not to the guardians; but their contribution for the year will be 93,000*l.* for the poorer districts of London; and if you come to

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Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

the City of London, their contribution will be 231,000*l.*

Mr. *Benn.*

434. I just wanted to ask this question at this stage: You have those figures; I suppose you cannot give us the figures of the rateable value per head of the population in the two districts?—No; I have not those figures here, but I could easily give them.

435. That is a very important consideration, you will recognise?—May I say this: It is not quite fair to assume that these poorer districts are bearing the whole burden. If I take the actual payments under the three heads of The Common Poor Fund, The Indoor Pauper Grant, distributed by the County Council, and The Equalisation Fund, the poorer parishes receive 521,000*l.* per annum. I may perhaps give the amounts that some of the poorer parishes receive: Bethnal Green, 48,000*l.*; Camberwell, 38,000*l.*; Chelsea, 6,000*l.*; St. George's-in-the-East, 28,000*l.*; Greenwich, 34,000*l.*; Lambeth, 34,000*l.*; Mile End, 29,000*l.*; St. Olave's, 22,000*l.*; St. Pancras, 30,000*l.*; Poplar, 39,000*l.*; St. Saviour's, 50,000*l.*; Shoreditch, 24,000*l.*; Stepney, 17,000*l.*; Whitechapel, 20,000*l.*; Woolwich, 19,000*l.*; Fulham, 9,062*l.*; St. Giles', 1,400*l.*; Hackney, 21,000*l.*; Holborn, 35,000*l.*; and Islington, 6,000*l.* Then the contributions vary from 5,000*l.* in Marylebone to 231,000*l.* in the City of London. I only refer to these figures to show that the richer parishes already contribute very large sums to the poorer districts of the metropolis.

436. On that, may I ask you, notwithstanding all the assistance which the poorer parishes receive from the Common Poor Fund and the Equalisation Fund, is it not a fact that their rates remain considerably higher than the rates of the wealthier parishes?—The rates are no doubt higher in some parishes.

437. Notwithstanding all this assistance, is it not a fact that the burden of rates borne by the poorer parishes is considerably higher than the burden borne by the rich?—There are, no doubt, poorer parishes which have to bear a heavier burden than the wealthier.

438. In the light of those figures, can you suggest to the Committee any plan whereby poorer parishes willing to put works in hand to meet exceptional distress could get that financial assistance which is absolutely necessary for the carrying out of the recommendations in the Local Government Board circular?—No, I cannot; but I do not think as yet it has been quite established that works which are necessary cannot be carried out now by those authorities. It is to be borne in mind that this Equalisation Fund has been established expressly for that particular purpose. They have as yet only received a payment for one-half year. That grant will make a very material difference in the cases of the poorest parishes which have been referred to. I may just say this: I do not know whether I made it perfectly clear that in the statement which I read just now I have doubled the half-year's payment that has actually been made to get the amount for the year in the case of the Equalisation Fund. It does not represent what has actually been paid up to the present time.

Mr. *Benn*—continued.

This statement shows the receipts and payments by each parish in respect of the Common Poor Fund the payments by the County Council at the rate of 4*d.* per head per day for indoor poor; and the payments in respect of the Equalisation Fund, but double the one half-year's payment.

Chairman.

439. Some of the members of the Committee would like to have that statement printed as part of your evidence; therefore, perhaps you will hand it in?—I will. (*The document is delivered in.* Vide *Appendix.*)

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

440. You have stated that according to the terms of the out-relief regulation order, relief out of the workhouse may be given to the destitute able-bodied in case of sudden and urgent necessity—the question I want to put to you is this: would the recent spell of extraordinarily severe weather constitute such a necessity?—The cases which are chiefly contemplated there are cases which occur between the meetings of the guardians, cases to be dealt with by the relieving officer between the meetings.

441. You say "chiefly contemplated;" but would it not be a consideration with the guardians themselves too—would it not be a point which the guardians themselves might consider at their meetings?—Yes; but it is rather difficult to say that a case continues to be "sudden" for several weeks; although I believe you will find that that is the view that the Camberwell guardians have been acting upon; they have been leaving the relieving officers to deal with cases as "sudden and urgent" from week to week, without giving any directions themselves as to the relief to be granted.

442. Will you take this case: an able-bodied man, 40 years of age, thrown out of work by the weather, applies to London guardians for relief for himself and family, as they are entirely destitute of food and firing. My question is upon that case. Was it competent for the London guardians to give that man and his family relief out of the workhouse?—We will assume that that case arises between the meetings of the guardians.

443. No, that is not the case which I desire to submit to you; it is the case of a man applying to the guardians at their meeting: He is out of employment; thrown out of work by the weather; he is able-bodied, and he asks for relief; is it or is it not competent for the guardians to give that man relief out of the workhouse?—At the particular meeting when the case arises for the first time, or week after week?

444. We will take first the application originally made?—Yes, I think if the case was "sudden and urgent" they might at the particular meeting.

445. Then would you be surprised to learn that the clerk to the guardians advised them that it would be illegal to give out-relief in such case?—But was that a case where the question was as to the first application at a particular meeting, or was it a case of relief by reason of alleged continuance of "sudden and urgent necessity?"

446. As I understand, at that particular meeting: the question was whether the relief should

Mr. *Pickersgill*—continued.

should be given to that man at that time?—I have no knowledge of the actual facts of that case.

447. No, but I am putting to you that case as one that occurred, and I am asking you as to the legal position—whether or not it would be competent for the guardians to give relief under such circumstances?—The words in the order were specially intended to govern the cases which occurred between meetings of the guardians, where the relieving officer should give relief on his own discretion. I am not prepared to say that at the first meeting the guardians might not regard it as a case of sudden and urgent necessity; and I think that whether they should do so or not would be a matter for their decision; but in strictness they could not within the spirit of the Order be dealing week after week on those lines with the same case; and I think that possibly that was what the clerk had in his mind; but I think you will find that at Camberwell they have been doing to a large extent just what you have been putting to me.

448. You think that in Camberwell they have been doing what I am suggesting?—That the guardians have left to the relieving officer the giving of relief, week after week, to the same persons, as cases of sudden and urgent necessity.

449. I will put it to you in this way. Would it be competent for the guardians during a time of severe frost to pass an Act upon a resolution somewhat in these terms: "Resolved—That whilst this weather holds out-relief be given to destitute able-bodied persons who have been resident for 12 months in the parish?—That is very general.

450. That embodies a general rule for the time?—No, they could not pass it; at least if they passed it it would be illegal.

451. It would be illegal?—Would you mind giving me your words again?

452. With pleasure. "Resolved—That whilst this weather holds out-relief be given to destitute able-bodied persons who have been resident for 12 months in the parish"?—But then under what conditions—with a labour test or without any test at all?

453. Take it either way. My point is that the relief is to be given out of the workhouse?—If the guardians have provided a labour test, there is nothing whatever to prevent their giving out-door relief to able-bodied persons who need relief on account of want of work provided that the person is employed in the stone-yard, or whatever the labour test may be; but if they wish to make other exceptions, that is to say to give out-relief to able-bodied persons solely on the ground of their being out of work without imposing any test at all and the case is not one of sudden and urgent necessity for the time being, they could only make the exceptions by applying to the Board, furnishing particulars, and obtaining their consent in the particular cases.

454. Then, as I understand it, they could not deal with exceptional distress in the general way that the resolution I have suggested embodies?—No.

455. It would be illegal?—It would be illegal.

Mr. *Pickersgill*—continued.

456. You would intervene if they did so?—If we knew it certainly we should say that they had no authority to do it.

457. Very good; I will take that answer and I will pass away from that. You told us yesterday that guardians could only set persons to work as a test?—Yes. That of course is subject to the reference to the statutes I referred to.

458. I am coming to that; but speaking generally you told us yesterday that guardians could only set persons to work as a test?—That has been invariably regarded as the position of matters, so far as the past practice is concerned.

459. As I understand, they cannot set persons to work for wages?—The guardians relieve the necessities of the individual, and we should say they would not be justified in giving an equal sum to all, whatever the necessities might be, or to pay according to the amount of work done, but that they should have a scale which, independently of the amount of work, gives the man with two children and a wife more than one who has none, and so on.

460. That is what I understand?—And that is the invariable practice of boards of guardians.

461. Am I right in supposing that that prohibition against the payment of wages as such is not an express statutory prohibition, but that it is a prohibition imposed by an order made by the board under the authority of the New Poor Act of 1834?—Yes, that is so.

462. Then, is it not a fact that the very year after the New Poor Act became law the Legislature expressly authorised boards of guardians to acquire land and set proper persons to work upon it for wages—the very year after the New Poor Act became law—in the 5th and 6th of William IV., chapter 69. You did not refer to that particular Act in the course of your review of the old statutes?—No, I did not. Which is the section you refer to?

463. It is 5th and 6th William IV., chap. 69. I do not know that I have got the section, but if you hand me the statute I can find the section immediately?—This is probably what you refer to: "All the powers and authorities in and by an Act passed in the twenty-second year of the reign of King George III., entitled an Act for the better relief and employment of the poor, given to guardians of the poor for or relating to the enclosing of any part or portion of waste or common land as therein mentioned; and all powers and authorities in and by an Act passed in the fifty-ninth year," and so on, "shall in future be exercised (under the control, and subject to the Rules, Orders, and Regulations of the Poor Law Commissioners) by the overseers of the poor in any parish not under the management of a board of guardians and by the guardians of the poor of any union or parish formed or established by virtue of any statute or local Act."

Mr. *Jackson.*

464. Is not that limited to wastes or common lands within the particular union?—I think it refers to the provisions of the 1 and 2 William IV.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

465. Does it not have this effect: that it applies an Act of 59th George III.?—And an Act of the 1st and 2nd William IV., cap. 42.

466. But that statute, which was passed the year after the new Poor Act, gave guardians a power, which they had not before, to acquire land either by purchase or hiring, and to employ poor people upon that for wages?—The powers given by the earlier Acts were given to overseers of parishes. At that time there had been no boards of guardians.

467. Quite so?—Then, the Poor Law Amendment Act having established the boards of guardians, this Act conferred upon the guardians any powers which overseers had under those earlier Acts.

468. Exactly. Although the new Poor Act had been passed the year before, under which you have made the order prohibiting payment in the form of wages, the next year after the passing of that Act the Legislature expressly gave powers to boards of guardians to pay wages to poor persons employed upon land?—Yes; it is the case that those powers of overseers were transferred to guardians in the year after the Poor Law Amendment Act was passed.

469. Then the point to which I wish to come is this: Does not that, to the extent of the Act of 5th and 6th William IV., override what you understand to be the general principle of the new Poor Act of 1834?—No; I should not be prepared to say that; although it is quite true that that is on the Statute Book.

470. But it passed the very year after?—Yes. But from the very early days after the passing of the Act of 1834, the principle to which I have referred has been invariably adopted.

471. I quite agree; but my point is the intention of the Legislature: Is it not a fact that the Legislature expressly, the year after the passing of the new Poor Act, conferred these powers upon guardians which they did not at that time possess?—That is the case.

472. Now these powers are to be exercised under the control, and subject to the rules, orders, and regulations of the Local Government Board; I think you quoted that yourself in your evidence?—Yes.

473. Have you been advised by legal authorities that you could not issue a general order affecting these powers, or under which these powers should be exercised?—The opinion of the law officers was that those regulations would be in the way not of extending the powers, but of restricting the powers which guardians might exercise.

474. That I perfectly understand?—But what the board would consider (and they have so stated) as regards the issue of regulations is that those regulations should apply to the particular scheme (assuming the scheme were approved), and should not be regulations to be issued generally irrespective of the schemes.

475. Do I understand that you have been advised that the Legislature does not contemplate the issue of a general order under those words?

Mr. *Pickersgill*—continued.

—I think there is nothing in the statute that implies it.

476. That is not quite my point. My point is whether it would be competent for the board to issue a general order under those words?—I am not at all prepared to say that it would not.

477. You have not been advised, at all events, to that effect?—I am not at all prepared to say that it would not be competent to the Board to do so.

478. You have not been so advised?—No; but there would be considerable difficulty in framing regulations of that kind before the department knew what the schemes were; and there are other classes of cases, where the words are very similar, where the Board never have issued general regulations but have made their rules with regard to particular cases.

479. Will you tell us the similar or analogous instances?—I know of nothing precisely similar to this.

480. I thought you said there were similar instances where the board had issued, not a general order but particular orders: Could you give a single instance; it would be interesting to have it perhaps?—I may mention, by way of instance, sales of parish property. We have, in our orders authorising the sale, prescribed the conditions as to sale in the particular case.

Mr. *Jackson.*

481. What case was that?—Sales of parish property. There is no general order. In the order authorising the sale we prescribe the conditions.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

482. Now these statutes provide that the land taken must be in or near the union or parish—you are, no doubt, aware of that?—That is so.

483. May I take it that the Board would give a very liberal construction to these words "in or near the union or parish?"—I do not think the Board have gone so far as to consider that point. What they have done when a board of guardians has raised the question has been this: they have asked the guardians themselves to state what scheme they proposed.

484. Yes, but with your experience I think it is a fair question if the Chairman would allow it. I will take the case of a London board of guardians, because, as you know, the Poplar Board, and I think also the Hackney Board, are interested in this: Supposing they came to you with a scheme to acquire land, perhaps 12 or even 20 miles away, telling you that practically suitable land could not be acquired nearer the union, would the board be disposed to construe the words "in or near" in a sufficiently liberal manner to cover such a scheme?—I could not say that.

485. That has not been considered?—No, because we have had no scheme; but I would suggest this, that a great deal depends upon the interpretation to be placed upon those words.

486. Obviously?—Because if the land is within the parish, or if it is quite close to the parish, there is no difficulty on the part of the persons employed in going daily from their own homes to the land; but if you are going to have land provided at a considerable

Mr. *Pickersgill*—continued.

considerable distance, it means either travelling by railway or in some other manner each day; and if those employed are to travel by railway there would probably also be a journey at the other end, because the land in the immediate neighbourhood of a railway station would be costly; or it might be so far away that the journey could not be made each day, and you would have to provide dwellings on the land for the persons employed; and then when you came to deal with the question of married persons you would have the difficult one as to whether you were to make provision for the whole of the families on the land, or whether you were to have two homes kept up; so that a good deal turns upon that.

487. The board would give great weight to considerations of that kind in approving or disapproving the scheme?—They would, necessarily, I think.

488. I am not going to ask you about the policy of these Acts, but, assuming that the policy of these Acts were approved, do you think that the machinery is adequate, or would it be necessary to amend the Acts? Assuming the policy of acquiring land and paying wages, is the machinery of the old Acts adequate in your judgment, or would an amendment be necessary?—I confess that I have not yet seen how the scheme could be practically and advantageously worked in the great majority of cases.

489. You think then that if that policy were approved we should require fresh legislation: is that the sum of it?—I think so.

490. I will leave that now?—May I take, as an instance, St. Olave's at the present time. St. Olave's, I think, has four parishes. At the rate of 50 acres per parish the guardians might hire 200 acres; but if that 200 acres is merely to be provided with the ordinary labour necessary for cultivating the land during the whole year, it would provide for a very, very small number, a number that would be absolutely quite immaterial in the case of a union such as that, and especially at a time such as the present, when you have the great number that you have now in receipt of relief on account of want of work. At an exceptional time when you specially want these means of providing for the unemployed, the land would be of comparatively very little use. It is to be borne in mind that it is during the severe weather and periods of frost that the greatest difficulty arises, and at that time the land would be next to useless. I am only expressing my own personal opinion on these matters and in no way committing the department.

491. I want to ask you about the Local Government Board circular, if you please. That circular expresses a desire that guardians and sanitary authorities should co-operate?—Yes.

492. In order, I suppose, that the respectable working class temporarily out of employment may not be brought into direct relation with the poor law authorities?—Yes, the main purpose was that those whose independence it was most desirable to maintain should be helped in that way.

493. If that co-operation were secured, would not the work given by the sanitary authority

Mr. *Pickersgill*—continued.

relieve the guardians from opening their test labour yard?—No, I think not. It was desired to make a distinction between those that it was deemed desirable to help in this way and other classes of poor. There is no doubt that there are a great many who never have done much work; and never would. The labour yard would be a test of destitution for them.

494. Then your view is that the better class of workmen would be relieved by a sanitary authority, and that the "loafer" class would be referred back to the labour test?—Yes. That was expressed very clearly in a circular letter that was issued by Mr. Chamberlain in March 1886. After referring to the returns of pauperism, it proceeds thus: "The Local Government Board have however thought it their duty to go beyond the returns of actual pauperism, which are all that come under their notice in ordinary times, and they have made some investigation into the condition of the working class generally. They are convinced that in the ranks of those who do not ordinarily seek Poor Law relief there is evidence of much and increasing privation, and if the depression in trade continues, it is to be feared that large numbers of persons usually in regular employment will be reduced to the greatest straits. Such a condition of things is a subject for deep regret and very serious consideration. The spirit of independence which leads so many of the working classes to make great personal sacrifices rather than incur the stigma of pauperism is one which deserves the greatest sympathy and respect, and which it is the duty and interest of the community to maintain by all the means at its disposal. Any relaxation of the general rule at present obtaining, which requires as a condition of relief to able-bodied male persons on the ground of their being out of employment the acceptance of an order for admission to the workhouse, or the performance of an adequate task of work as a labour test, would be most disastrous as tending directly to restore the condition of things which before the reform of the poor laws destroyed the independence of the labouring class and increased the poor rate until it became an almost insupportable burden. It is not desirable that the working classes should be familiarised with poor law relief, and if once the honourable sentiment which now leads them to avoid it is broken down, it is probable that recourse will be had to this provision on the slightest occasion. The Local Government Board have no doubt that the powers which the guardians possess are fully sufficient to enable them to deal with ordinary pauperism and to meet the demand for relief from the classes who usually seek it. When the workhouse is full, or when the circumstances are so exceptional that it is desirable to give outdoor relief to the able-bodied poor on the ground of want of work, the guardians in the unions which are the great centres of population are authorised to provide a labour test, on the performance of which grants in money and kind may be made according to the discretion of the guardians. In other unions, where the guardians have not already this power, the necessary order is issued whenever the circumstances appear to require it."

Mr. *Pickersgill*—continued.

495. May I put this further question to you, if you will allow me. Would not the effect of the work given by the sanitary authority be to relieve the poor rate and prevent these people coming upon the poor rate?—In some cases it would, no doubt.

496. In some cases?—Yes.

497. I think that the West Ham Guardians asked to be allowed to make a contribution to the West Ham Corporation in consideration of the corporation providing work. That was the application made to them?—That was so.

498. To come immediately to London, you would agree, I think, that it is the poorest and most heavily rated districts in London that have the largest number of unemployed upon their hands in times of exceptional distress?—The circumstances vary so much that I could hardly assent to that statement.

499. I will take cases of the vestries which have provided work—those which have provided most work: Bethnal Green, for instance. You would agree that Bethnal Green is both a poor district and a heavily-rated district?—It is a poor district, and heavily rated, and has no adequate workhouse accommodation, and, had they not a labour test, would be at the mercy of the applicants for relief.

500. Poplar has also felt very much the pressure of the unemployed. You would agree that Poplar is both poor and very heavily rated?—I think the letter from Poplar stated that there had been no very exceptional distress.

501.—Did not Poplar suggest the establishment of a joint board for London to deal with the question?—No. That communication that I read was from Mr. Crookes, of Poplar; but it was a representation made by the representatives of a number of unions, including Poplar.

502. Poplar taking the lead in the matter?—Yes.

503. Are you aware that in Poplar the rate amounts to 7*s.* 1*d.* in the £; the highest in London?—No; I have not the return which was issued in connection with the Equalisation of Rates Act.

504. I was asking you when we adjourned about the poor districts of London. I think the last question I asked you was whether you are aware that the rate in Poplar is 7*s.* 1*d.*?—I am sorry to say I cannot state what was the actual rate in that period.

Mr. *Jackson.*

505. Will you kindly give us the details of it if you can. We have been speaking so much about the poor law and the guardians that I do not want it to be supposed that it is the poor rate that is 7*s.* 1*d.*?—No; it would be the total of the rates for all purposes.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

506. The total rates 7*s.* 1*d.*?—I think that the rate referred to in the return—I am not sure that I am right—would be the rate before the parish had the benefit of the Equalisation of Rates Act.

507. No. May I correct you; I am allowing for that; I am allowing for the full operation of the Equalisation of Rates Act; before that it was 7*s.* 5½*d.*, allowing for that it is 7*s.* 1*d.*-60. Then I may take it that the rate in Poplar is 7*s.* 1*d.*, allowing for the full operation of those equalising Acts to which you just now referred?—I am afraid for the moment I cannot confirm that statement; but I quite accept the statement that you make.

508. I take that from *this* return?—*This* is a statement prepared by the London County Council.

509. Yes, that is so. It was accepted as a basis in the discussion?—It is an *estimate* of the rate.

510. No, pardon me; it is not an estimate, it is the actual rate for 1893–4, minus, it is true, the estimate of the benefit derived from the Equalisation of Rates Act?—I think that the document to which the honourable Member is referring is a statement prepared by the London County Council, showing the rates which last year were levied in the several parishes in the metropolis, correcting the actual rate levied by the diminution or increase which it was expected would arise as the result of the passing of the Equalisation of Rates Act, which was then before the House.

511. That is perfectly correct?—I am sorry to say I have not the information as to the rate actually levied now.

512. Would you not say that in such districts as Bethnal Green and Poplar—which we have been speaking about—there is much work desirable to be done which is not done?—I think that is very probable, and that was really one of the main reasons for the passing of the Act that we were referring to.

513. And this work might be done in the winter?—That would be a matter entirely within the discretion of the vestry or district board.

514. Yes, in the discretion of the board. May I ask you this further question: Would not the doing of that work benefit not the locality only but the whole of London?—I think that everything that improves the sanitary condition of a particular district in London is an advantage to the whole of London.

Mr. *Jackson.*

515. And the whole of England?—Yes.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

516. Now, I want to ask you one or two questions about the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, to which you referred in the last part of your evidence. I think that that fund was established in 1867?—That was so.

517. And from time to time since common charges have been added to it?—Yes; the chief addition was in 1871, when a proportion of the cost of the indoor poor was added.

518. There is one item to which I wish to call your attention, and that is the cost of maintenance of pauper children. I believe that the whole of the cost of the maintenance of pauper children is charged upon the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund?—That is so. When I say "the whole cost of the maintenance," that means

Mr. *Pickersgill*—continued.

means merely the maintenance of the children—not the cost of the erection of the buildings.

519. No, but the whole cost of carrying on the Institution?—Yes.

520. And is not the principle this: that the local authority really spends the money, dipping into a common fund and being controlled by the supervision of the Local Government Board?—Yes, they dip into a common fund sometimes controlled by Statute, sometimes by the very nature of things, and as regards other items by the Local Government Board.

521. Then what is the safeguard against extravagant expenditure by the local board of guardians, in that case?—In the first place a very large proportion of the children are orphan and deserted children, and no action on the part of the guardians can very materially alter the number that can come under their charge for relief.

522. Agreed?—As regards other cases it means separation from the family, and parents would hardly be prepared to give up their children to the charge of the guardians unless there was destitution which rendered aid from the guardians really necessary.

523. But assuming a given number of children to be maintained, it is obvious that they might be maintained in an extravagant or in an economical manner. The initiative is with the individual Board of Guardians, who draw upon a common fund; and I want to know what is the safeguard against extravagance?—No doubt there is no absolute check.

524. The check is the supervision of the Local Government Board?—Not as regards the maintenance of the children. There is a great deal necessarily in the discretion of the guardians which would regulate their expenditure; and, so far as I made any reference to these items, the distinction I wanted to draw was that outdoor paupers might be manufactured to any extent, and the number there would considerably regulate the amount that would come on the common fund.

525. You have used the expression disparagingly: "dipping into a common fund." Might not an opponent of the present Metropolitan Common Poor Fund say that with regard to the maintenance of the pauper children the local authorities were able to dip into a common fund?—No doubt they are enabled to dip into the common fund; and I would say that probably there is no class of poor with regard to which, if there is to be any extravagance, extravagance is more to be desired than in the case of the children in the schools.

Mr. *Jackson.*

526. May I ask if there is any maximum?—There is no maximum.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

527. Then the only check, as I understand, to sum up the whole matter, is the supervision and control of the Local Government Board?—The expense of the maintenance of those children is, very largely, absolutely in the hands of the guardians themselves.

528. Yes, that is my point?—And without supervision on the part of the Board.

Mr. *Pickersgill*—continued.

529. That is quite what I wished to bring out, that to a large extent the expenditure is entirely at the discretion of the guardians, who notwithstanding dip into a Common Fund for the expense?—That is so, clearly.

Mr. *Logan.*

530. Do the Local Government Board impose any restrictions upon boards of guardians as to the amount that they must pay per day in these labour test yards?—No; that is a question absolutely for the decision of the guardians.

531. There is no scale imposed by the Local Government Board?—The Local Government Board impose no scale—the guardians report what they have adopted. May I qualify that by saying that where, as at St. Olave's, they were proposing to pay an equal sum to everybody employed, the guardians were advised that that was an unwise proceeding, and that the money given should be measured by the necessities of the families rather than equal pay given to every person whatever might be the circumstances.

532. I am speaking now directly in reference to the labour test. Then I am to take it that my informant is wrong, who tells me that a resolution was passed by the Leicester board of guardians asking the Local Government Board to be allowed to increase the rate which they now pay of 5*d.* per day and one loaf to a married man, who works eight hours, to ninepence; my informant is wrong, is he, in telling me that such an application has been made to the Local Government Board? I wish to know whether the Leicester Board of Guardians are under any necessity whatever to make such applications; they think they are, decidedly?—The boards of guardians have to report to us, but our sanction is not required to any such increase as that which you suggest.

533. It is not required?—It is not required.

534. I think that that will be news to the Leicester Board of Guardians?—I will refer to any application that we have received. It is the Leicester Union that you refer to?

535. The Leicester Board of Guardians?—I will endeavour to get the application.

536. You said just now, in answer to a question by Mr. Pickersgill, that an able-bodied man out of employment had no right to ask the guardians for relief. Is it necessary, then, for a man to qualify for relief? Is it necessary for him to become destitute—to sell his home—to sell his furniture? I will put the question in another way. Would the guardians consider a man destitute who has not a penny in the world, whose children are starving, and who yet has furniture in his house? I wish to know whether that man is destitute in the eyes of the Local Government Board or not?—I am not aware that I said that an able-bodied man out of employment had no right to ask the guardians for relief. I never intended to imply anything of the kind. A man who had not a penny, and whose children were starving, would be destitute. At the same time, something might depend upon what the furniture in his house was.

537. We will say good furniture; the better the furniture the harder the man's case, I main-

Mr. *Logan*—continued.

tain?—I do not want to answer a question too generally that may be applied to exceptional circumstances; but I say this, that it is not necessary for a man to sell all his furniture in order to obtain relief from the guardians.

538. Might I ask you whether the Local Government Board have had any applications from guardians to relax the present very stringent regulations as to the giving of out-door relief to able-bodied men?—I do not remember any particular cases, but the guardians themselves can make exceptions with the consent of the Local Government Board, and so far as I am aware there has not been any instance where the guardians have proposed a relaxation of the rule where assent has been refused; but I am referring now to relaxation as regards particular cases and not to a general suspension of the regulations.

539. You have had no such application?—I cannot pledge myself to that. You must remember that there are many hundreds of cases that are coming in.

540. Quite so. I only meant any general application on the present unprecedented distress throughout the country?—Certainly there are not any such applications.

541. I gathered that you and the board were opposed to the idea of any Imperial grant in aid of the unemployed?—I have not expressed any opinion on the part of the department.

542. Then it was your own opinion. You thought that there would be considerable difficulties about it?—That is my own opinion.

543. And you also agreed to a suggestion of the honourable Member (I think for St. Pancras) that all work undertaken by local authorities should be necessary work, or work that would be an advantage to the community when finished?—Yes, generally that would express my view, that when local authorities are expending rates for the purpose of works, their duty to their constituents is to carry out works that are necessary or reasonably to the advantage of the district.

544. Then have you ever considered this: that supposing there are no works wanted in a neighbourhood, it means either the workhouse or starvation to able bodied men?—It means relief by the guardians, no doubt, if there is no work that can be obtained, and assuming there is nothing done in the way of charity, which is a very important factor in times of great distress.

545. All the guardians can do is to offer the workhouse, or as they are or have been doing at

Mr. *Logan*—continued.

Leicester, 5d. a day and a loaf for eight hours work?—That rests with the guardians.

Chairman.

546. The amount they give for the labour is to be determined by them, is it not?—Yes.

Mr. *Logan.*

547. My last question is this: I should like to know whether the Board have ever considered that it would be desirable to devise some scheme for the maintenance of those who are willing to work, but who are unable to get work, and who prefer death to going into the workhouse, which would provide for the maintenance of those men out of a common Imperial fund instead of leaving them to the tender mercies of promiscuous charity; I should like also to know whether, in your opinion, the present system of leaving those men to charity is not more likely, yea, far more likely, to sap that independence for which you are so very anxious, than would be a well-devised scheme for grappling with the entire subject upon Imperial lines?—I will answer that question as far as I can.

Chairman.

548. Have you seen any such scheme; that, I think, has a great deal to do with it?—No, I have not. As regards the question of starvation, the very principles of the Poor Law are that no person who requires relief and who asks for it shall be without relief; but that person is not to have the choice of the way in which that relief is to be given. The guardians who give such relief, as the representatives of the ratepayers, determine whether, in the interest of the ratepayers generally, it should be given in the workhouse or in the form of out-relief, or in what way the necessities can be best met; and I think it would be a very serious matter if you left to each individual who becomes a charge, whatever may be the circumstances which occasioned it, the right to demand that the assistance given to him should be given in the way that he thought best. As I have said before, there is that feeling of independence in some men that will induce them to submit to any privation almost, rather than become a burden on others; but I do not think that the burden would be regarded by them any the less if the funds were supplied by the State than it is now that the funds are supplied by the locality. I am, however, only expressing my own view; I cannot in any way commit the department on questions of that kind.

Friday, 22nd February 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Acland.
Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. Billson.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. Bousfield.
Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.
Mr. Crean.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Mather.
Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. Round.
Mr. Whiteley.
Mr. John Wilson (Durham).
Mr. John Wilson (Govan).

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN IN THE CHAIR.

Sir HUGH OWEN, K.C.B., re-called; and further Examined.

Chairman.

549. I BELIEVE you have received further replies to your letter since the Committee adjourned?—Yes; we have received to-day 260 additional replies to the letter that was sent out by desire of the Committee. I may say that the replies received yesterday were all in the hands of the printer last evening.

550. We are much obliged. Those that came this morning will be no doubt dealt with in the same way?—They will be in the printer's hands to-day.

Mr. *John Burns.*

551. That makes a total of over 500?—Yes, there were 280 yesterday and there are 260 to-day.

Mr. *Jackson.*

552. Has a letter from the guardians of Sheffield been received yet?—I am not sure; no letter from Sheffield is amongst those that I have here, but four or five have been received since which I have not got with me.

553. Has a letter been received from West Ham?—I think not.

Chairman.

554. Is there any other point you wish to refer to before honourable Members continue their examination?—May I just say with regard to some questions which were asked me yesterday by the honourable Member for Market Harborough with regard to Leicester, as to the facts of the Local Government Board approving of the value of the relief given to out-door paupers, that since I gave my evidence I have seen a printed statement issued by the guardians which fully justifies the doubt which the honourable Member entertained as to the accuracy of my statement. I had not previously seen it.

Chairman—continued.

This printed statement consists of certain resolutions passed by the guardians; first, with regard to the task of work, and next as to the allowance for relief to be given in certain classes of cases, and appended to that statement is this note:—"We, the Local Government Board, consent to and approve of the above order of the board of guardians of the poor of the Leicester Union. Dated this 17th day of July, 1894. C. N. Dalton, assistant secretary." As a matter of fact, no such addition has ever been made by the Board to this resolution; all that was done by the Board was on that date (17th July) to write to the Leicester Guardians stating "The Board are prepared to approve of the tasks of oakum picking and stone breaking set forth in the order made by the guardians."

Mr. *Logan.*

555. The answer of the Board of 17th July 1894 was made to an application from the guardians of Leicester; will you tell us the date of the guardians' application?—The letter was received on the 3rd May.

556. Was that the first application?—There is a long correspondence.

557. Might we have the date of the first application?—We received a letter on the 4th November 1893, sending regulations as to the tasks and terms of work of outdoor paupers.

558. Then it is the fact, is it not, that the application made by the Leicester Guardians in the winter of 1893–4 was not replied to by the Local Government Board until July, 1894, that is to say, six months afterwards, and after the cause for the application had passed off?—No, I am not at all prepared to admit that; I should like to go through the papers before I answer that question.

Mr. *Logan*—continued.

559. Are you able to contradict it?—There was considerable correspondence, and it is necessary for me to go through it before I could answer the question.

560. It might save the time of the Committee perhaps if you came a little bit nearer home. You promised yesterday to inquire if any application had been received by your Department from the Leicester Union about 22nd January of this year for permission to increase the rate of payment in the labour test yard; have you been able to learn anything about such an application, and has such application been answered?—A letter was received on the 24th January with reference to an amended scale of relief proposed to be given to able-bodied paupers who were working on the labour test. The letter pointed out that the money given was in excess of the kind which was not in strict accordance with the notes to article (2) in the labour test order, and stated that the guardians felt that the scale was based on very economical lines, and asked for the Board's consent. In the first place, they omitted to forward to the Board the scale that was referred to. The Board wrote for that, and it was received on the 8th of February, and yesterday, the papers having been in the meantime referred to the Board's inspector of the district for his observations as to the proposal, the following letter was sent. (I may say the letter was drafted to be sent yesterday without any reference to the questions that were asked at this Committee.) "The Board observe that it is stated on this form that they have approved of the tasks of work and the scale of relief therein specified; they would, however, point out that the amount of relief prescribed by the guardians does not require the sanction of the Board, and that the Board have not, as stated, expressed any approval of the scale, that being a matter entirely within the discretion of the guardians, except so far as the proportions of the relief in kind and in money may not be in accordance with the Board's regulations, which require that half shall be in money and half in kind. I am to add that the Board attach importance to the guardians, when they allow outdoor relief to adult able-bodied men seeking relief by reason of being out of work, giving one half at least in articles of food or fuel, or in other articles of absolute necessity, as this affords greater security for the wife and children having the benefit of the relief than when the relief is given wholly or almost wholly in money."

561. My point is this: Men are starving in Leicester; you tell us here that local authorities have full powers to deal with this question of want of employment, and you are surprised to hear that the Leicester Board of Guardians are under the impression that they have not full powers. They are told, I presume by their clerk, though I cannot say it for a fact, that if they had paid the additional sum per day without getting the authority of the Local Government Board, they would have been surcharged. At any rate, the result of the present system is this: that although this application was made on the 22nd of January for power to deal with the starving unemployed, one month is allowed to elapse before an answer is obtained from the

Mr. *Logan*—continued.

Local Government Board. Under these circumstances, I ask you whether you do not think you ought to modify your statement that the local authorities have full power to deal with this question?—Most certainly not. The facts of the case, according to my view, afford no ground whatever for modifying the opinion I expressed. If the clerk has been wrong in his advice, the responsibility must rest with the clerk; but, as I stated before, the value of the relief that is to be given by the guardians in cases of able-bodied persons on task work rests with them, and we have so informed them. The only question with which the Board are concerned is as to the proportions in which that relief shall be given in money or in kind. As regards that matter, the order says that half shall be given in money and half in kind. The guardians proposed a different apportionment, and the board have informed them of the importance they attached to half being given in money and half in kind in the interests of the wives and children of the men. The experience of the board has been that if the whole relief or the greater part of it is given in money there is somewhat less probability of the wives and children having the same amount in necessaries as they would if part was given in kind. The facts of the case, I contend with all submission, do not in any way justify the suggestion that the cause taken has been inconsistent with that which I have referred to. As regards the earlier case referred to by the honourable Member, I am not in a position at the moment to state the facts. The correspondence, as I said, took place in 1893 and 1894. I only referred to it for the purpose of showing that the statement which was appended to these resolutions, purporting to be a statement of the Board, was not in fact appended by them. I shall be happy to look through the earlier letters and papers and give the facts if it is desired, but I cannot offhand do so.

Chairman.

562. If the Leicester Board of Guardians were advised that in case they granted an increased allowance to those relieved they would be surcharged, they were wrongly advised?—Clearly.

Mr. *Logan.*

563. Seeing that apparently last year it was six months before an answer was received, and this year one month, I should like to ask whether you do not think it would be in the interest of humanity that a clear and definite statement of the actual powers possessed by local authorities for dealing with this question should be issued by the Local Government Board, and so save this cruel delay that has taken place at Leicester?—Again, I must say I do not admit this statement as to the delay. I will go through the correspondence, if you wish it, as regards 1893.

564. I do not think it is necessary to go through the correspondence?—Then I think it must not be taken that there has been a delay of six months in approving of the scheme which has been submitted by the guardians.

565. Take the case this year; nearly a month has elapsed since the application from Leicester was received. We are in the middle of a very sad

Mr. *Logan*—continued.

sad winter; men, women and children in Leicester are crying for bread; the Leicester guardians are under the impression—derived, I presume from their clerk—that all they can do is to offer the men 5*d.* a day?—When the honourable Member says that nearly a month has elapsed since the receipt of the guardians' letter, I may say that during that interval there was nothing whatever to prevent the guardians giving the outdoor poor any amount of relief that they required, the guardians having sole discretion in the matter, subject to one condition, that half should be in money and half should be in kind. Assuming that there has been any delay in the communications between the guardians and the board, it is not the fact that that delay has prevented the guardians giving whatever relief they deemed necessary, subject to that one condition.

Chairman.

566. And the guardians must no doubt be well aware of that fact from the correspondence?—I can hardly suppose that it was otherwise. If they were under a misapprehension it was very much to be regretted. With regard to the amount of relief, and as to its being 5*d.* a day, I may take the scale fixed in 1894 and the scale fixed this year. The scale fixed in 1894 was as follows: "For a man and wife 5*d.* and one loaf of bread daily."

Mr. *Logan.*

567. Who fixed that scale?—The guardians: "For a man, wife, and child, 6*d.* and one loaf; for a man, wife, and two children, 7*d.* and one loaf; for a man, wife, and three children, 8*d.* and one loaf; for a man, wife, and four children, 9*d.* and one loaf; for a man, wife, and five children, 10*d.* and one loaf; for a man, wife, and six children, 11*d.* and one loaf; and for a man, wife, and seven children, 1*s.* and one loaf." Besides this relief a weekly allowance of 6*d.* in grocery is allowed to each married couple with an additional loaf of bread for each child under 16 years of age dependent on its parents. The new scale which they have adopted increases the relief from 5*d.* to 9*d.* a day for man and wife, with relief in kind, the amount varying, according to the number of children, from 10*d.* up to 1*s.* 4*d.* a day, with the addition of a loaf of bread.

Chairman.

568. Does that scale come within the sanction of your Board; does it accommodate itself to your rules as to half in money and half in kind?—No, it does not—that has been pointed out to them.

Mr. *John Burns.*

569. Is it not the fact that at Poplar at this present moment the board of guardians is giving for seven hours' work 1*s.* 9*d.* in money, and 1*s.* 9*d.* in kind, or over 6½*d.* an hour for stonework similar to that which is being done at Leicester for 5*d.* a day under the first scale, and 10*d.* a day under the new scale; and, if so, what is the reason for the difference in the practice of boards of guardians under a uniform circular?—I have not the scale at Poplar, I am sorry to say.

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

570. I have the scale here?—No doubt that is correct, but it is a matter entirely in the discretion of the guardians with that one limitation, that one half must be in money and one half in kind, unless our consent is obtained to any departure from the rule.

571. Are we to gather that at Leicester 5*d.* to 10*d.* a day can be given partly in wages and partly in kind, and in another district there can be given 1*s.* 9*d.* in kind and 1*s.* 9*d.* in wages in the discretion of the guardians?—Yes.

572. It is absolutely in the discretion of the guardians?—Yes.

573. Has the Local Government Board any control in that? Has it ever exercised any control in fixing the scale?—No.

574. Or in establishing a maximum?—No.

575. Does it propose doing so?—No.

Mr. *Bousfield.*

576. You had an application two or three years ago, did you not, from the Hackney Board of Guardians with regard to taking some land on which they wanted to set the unemployed at work?—We had letters from three or four metropolitan boards of guardians last year, not submitting any precise scheme, but asking generally whether the board would consent.

577. And upon that some correspondence ensued. I will not at present ask what the result of the correspondence was, because the time is not yet ripe for considering the general question, and I understand we shall have an opportunity of hearing your evidence as to that on a later occasion; but some correspondence ensued, did it not?—The letters were to the same effect: that if the guardians submitted the scheme which they proposed, giving fully the details of the arrangements, it would be considered by the Board.

578. Could you furnish the Committee with copies of that correspondence, so that we could have it before us when the time comes for going into the larger question?—Certainly.

579. With regard to Hackney, you will find the correspondence goes over two or three years; can you furnish us with copies of that correspondence?—Certainly.

Mr. *Lawrence.*

580. Referring to the case put by Mr. Pickersgill at Question No. 442 of a non-provident man with a good home applying for relief on frost stopping his work: would not the aiding such a case by a local authority do away with any need for providence and discourage the feeling of self-respect which prompts the joining in clubs and unions as mentioned by the honourable Member for Durham at Question No. 357?—Is the honourable Member referring to a case where the man immediately almost after he ceased to be in work applied to the guardians for relief?

581. That is it?—Even in such a case, if there was actual destitution it would be the duty of the guardians to give relief.

582. I do not ask that; I say, would not helping such a case prompt improvidence. The honourable Member for Bethnal Green put this case to you yesterday at Question 442: "An

Mr. *Lawrence*—continued.

able-bodied man, 40 years of age, thrown out of work by the weather, applies to London guardians for relief for himself and family, as they are entirely destitute of food and firing," and he is supposed to have a good home. I ask, would not helping that case by the local authority do away with any need for providence and discourage the feeling of self-respect that prompts a man to join clubs and unions such as the honourable Member for Durham mentioned in Question 357 where they have recourse to the money laid by in good times to help them in times of distress?—I am not sure whether, when the honourable Member refers to local authorities, he is referring to vestries or to district boards or to the guardians.

583. I used a general term on purpose?—It is material, because the two classes have such distinct duties.

584. It is a question of policy that I am asking. Would it not undermine providence if you promptly helped a man who, in the first frost, finds himself without resource?—Taking first the duty of a guardian. If a man is absolutely destitute it is their duty to relieve him.

585. I am not talking about the duties of the guardians. I am talking about the policy of such a treatment?—I think the policy hitherto has been that if a man is actually destitute, from whatever cause it may be, the guardians have the duty of relieving him.

586. If when a person asks to be relieved across the counter any authority had the power to relieve him across the counter without any test, would not that encourage improvidence?—I did not understand you before to say without any test.

587. Yes, that is the suggestion; would not that encourage improvidence?—Certainly it would.

588. To meet such a case of non-provident men with decent homes, have not the guardians at least two modes of action—namely, the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order and the modified workhouse test?—They have.

589. The Outdoor Relief Regulation Order empowers the guardians to give out-relief to able-bodied men and their families on the condition of the men performing the task of work most suitable to the worker's strength and capacity; the amount of relief given must be in proportion to the number of family, and not to the work performed in the labour-yards—that is correct, is it not?—That is so.

590. And is not an objection to the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order, otherwise relief in the labour yard, that in times of pressure enquiry by the poor law officers is difficult, and a man may receive this relief on some days while he gets work elsewhere on others, because they cannot check the statement that he is absolutely out of work; is it not difficult to check a man's statement when there is a pressure of applications?—It depends upon the staff.

591. As a matter of fact, during the pressure on this occasion in the last six weeks, may I take it that the staff is hardly up to making the enquiries necessary to ascertain whether the man is really out of work?—The staff ought to be largely increased where there is such an unusual number of applications.

Mr. *Lawrence*—continued.

592. As a matter of fact, is it commonly increased to such an extent as to enable enquiries to be made as to several hundreds of men, it maybe at short notice?—It should be.

593. Assuming that a man does get work in the labour yard for some days, and on other days he is really working elsewhere unknown to the authorities, which you would allow is quite a conceivable case, would you not?—It is conceivable.

594. Assuming that state of things by this means the labour market is not strengthened, and the self-respecting man who does not apply to the labour yard has to compete in the labour market with the man who gets relief at the labour yard?—No doubt that is so; but in many cases work in the labour yard is given the whole week and not on particular days.

595. Still there is that weakness, is there not, in the labour yard system?—There is that risk.

596. Is not another objection to the labour yard that there is no certainty that the family of the man gets any of the relief given?—It is with that view that the provision was made that half should be given in money and half in kind.

597. But even with that provision there is no certainty, is there, that the family gets any of the relief?—No absolute certainty.

598. The modified workhouse test is this, as I understand: The guardians may give out-relief to the wife and family of an able-bodied man at their own home if he enters the workhouse, but with the consent of the guardians he may absent himself to look for employment not more than 24 hours in the course of a week, during which 24 hours he as well as his family get outdoor relief?—There is no order to that effect, but in two or three instances the guardians have submitted proposals to that effect; and I may mention that during the last fortnight the guardians of Holborn asked the Board's sanction to an arrangement of that kind. The reply was that if the guardians were satisfied that there were cases where such an arrangement was desirable the board would not offer any objection—at the same time, reminding them of the provisions as regards providing a labour test instead of separating the husband, wife, and children, and also calling their attention to the provisions in the order which enable exceptions to be made in particular cases where the guardians deem it desirable, with the Board's sanction.

599. Practically they have sanctioned it, have they not?—They have sanctioned it.

600. The advantages of this order are these, are they not: that the family is certainly relieved; the labour market is certainly eased by the man being taken from competition, and the man is not encouraged in improvidence?—Those are the advantages resulting from such an arrangement.

601. As to the stigma of pauperism in entering the house, would you not, as an administrator of public charity, say that it is not relief in one place or another that pauperises, but the policy that teaches the poor that others will provide for them?—The stigma arises, so far as there is a stigma, from dependence on others who have compulsorily to contribute the funds for their support.

602. You

Mr. *Lawrence*—continued.

602. You assent to my proposition, I understand. Was it not the fact that under the old poor law there was no house test or similar qualification for relief, and yet these people were in many districts wholly demoralised—that is, had become paupers mentally dependent, as well as practically, on the assistance of others?—In many parishes undoubtedly that was the case.

603. As an administrator, would you not say that it is better for the community that the facts of persons living on the rates, etc., should be fully set out, so that the result of such a policy can be carefully watched by all concerned in supporting it?—I am not quite sure whether I follow the question.

604. I mean, is it not desirable that the fact that a man is receiving public relief (it does not matter in what form) should be fully known, so that the public who stand by can see by a daily barometer how their money goes and what is the effect upon the people to whom relief is granted?—There is an advantage from the point of view of its being an incentive to the man to make every effort to maintain himself, and not become a burden to others.

605. And it also has the advantage from the point of view of good government, has it not?—that is the point of my question.—It has its advantages from that point of view also.

606. As to the Poor Law returns being an index of general want, would not your Department contend from its experience that there is no hard-and-fast line between those who apply for parish relief and those who are in straitened circumstances but do not apply?—As regards the returns of the number of paupers, they are to a certain extent a barometer of the destitution that is prevailing; and the greater the destitution the greater the probability of persons being dragged down to pauperism; it is not an absolute test of the extent of destitution amongst persons of the class who always endeavour to avoid applying for relief.

607. That is not an absolute answer to my question, which is whether the experience of your department does not go to show that there is no hard and fast line between the classes that do apply and the classes just outside that do not apply?—It is certainly the case that there are a certain number just above the pauper line who at one time are on the pauper lists and at another are not.

608. Therefore, in gauging the number of applicants for relief, it must act as an automatic barometer, must it not, as to those who did not apply?—No, I should not be prepared to state that absolutely, because I think there may be a considerable amount of distress among those who never do apply which the returns of pauperism do not show.

609. Then you deny the statement which I thought you affirmed just now, that there is no hard and fast line between the two bodies?—I should not be prepared to say that there was a hard-and-fast line between the ordinary paupers and the class just above pauperism.

610. Is it not within your knowledge, as certainly it is within mine, that in rural districts it happens that unfortunately some of the family

Mr. *Lawrence*—continued.

are on the rates and others are in no such condition?—Undoubtedly there are such cases.

611. There is no hard-and-fast line in the same family. If there is no hard-and-fast line, then is it not the case that what is the gauge of one tank must certainly act upon the other tank which is connected with it by an overflowpipe. That is obvious?—I do not quite follow the question.

612. With regard to the circular of November, 1892, I gather you had only replies from 73 local authorities out of the 673 written to; I mean the circular referred to in the Report on the unemployed?—I think the communications to which the honourable Member refers are the letters that were addressed to the several authorities, asking them whether anything had been done by them in providing work; and in the large proportion of cases the replies were that nothing had been done because there had been really no exceptional distress.

613. What I put to you in my question, I take it, is correct. Did not this silence on the part of the 600 seem to throw a doubt as to the original need for such a special act on the part of the Department. I understand that you practically affirm that it does. Your Department has thought fit to try and follow up the results of acting on your circular?—By making the inquiries I referred to just now.

614. The replies seem rather meagre; but have you reckoned up the reports which state that the work so done was either bad or extravagant, or both bad and extravagant?—No, I have not reckoned up the cases; but I know in certain instances reports were made that a larger expenditure was incurred by reason of some of the labour being unskilled labour, and in some few instances there were references to the work not being satisfactory, and attributing it to persons of the loafer class having been employed.

615. I observe that 28 out of the 73 say that the work is of such a description as I have mentioned. It is the case that towns all over the country, including towns of the greatest and of minor magnitude, combine in that statement, is it not—take Glasgow, for instance?—There are a certain number of cases I am aware—I can go through them from the letters if it is desirable; but I could not offhand say what proportion of the cases were large urban districts and what were small districts, where an answer to that effect was given.

616. I have the names of the towns here?—I can go through them from the letters if that would be any convenience.

617. That would take too long I think. What I want to point out is this: it is the case, is it not, that Cardiff, Swansea, Wigan, Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield, Glasgow, and certain London centres characterised the work as expensive and bad?—If I may take one case, Cardiff for instance, it appears from the Table on page 203 of the Report on the unemployed, that nearly every applicant was examined by a sub-committee. Over 80 per cent. of applicants were unskilled men. Preference for employment was given to married men. Work was inferior and cost 15 per cent. more than if done under ordinary conditions." Then, as regards Swansea

Mr. *Lawrence*—continued.

"1,233*l.* was expended on labour. Work probably cost 10 per cent. more than if done by navvies."

618. Will you give us Glasgow?—Glasgow we should know nothing about officially, but I think the information is given in the return.

619. That is quite enough for my purpose. Your circulars suggest that the department are anxious to facilitate loans. With such facts as these as to the value of the work would you permit an advance of the whole sum required?—The great proportion of the cases in which works are carried out during a period of pressure like the present are works in respect of which the estimates, plans, and details have been prepared some time previously without reference to the class of persons who were to be employed upon them, and what is done by the authorities is not so much devising new works as expediting works that they had previously proposed. I have a statement here of the instances included in this return in which loans were sanctioned, and the periods for which the loans were granted. There have been some three or four instances where there has been ground for belief that the works have cost somewhat more than they would have done if skilled labour only had been employed; but I cannot say that the board have taken objection to sanctioning the loan on that ground, and in many cases it is extremely difficult to form an opinion of what the excess of cost has been by reason of that employment.

620. I was going to ask whether, speaking as an administrator, you think you are justified in advancing money to be repaid by a future generation for work which is done at a time when it cannot be of the full value of the money to be paid for it by the future generation?—I think the case must depend somewhat upon the facts. We are certainly not proceeding upon the line of sanctioning amounts which are unnecessary, or of sanctioning loans for works which are not required, simply with a view of providing employment.

621. If work in winter costs 30 per cent. more than work done in the proper seasons, ought the future generation to pay the additional amount for work done on such terms?—If that is done in one year, probably in another year the same thing might be done, which would mean that the ratepayers in the future would be relieved in the same way.

Chairman.

622. Do you allow loans for the whole expense of the work?—Yes.

623. You do not deduct some proportion from the total estimated expense, and allow the loan only for a portion of the charge?—No; we do not sanction a loan at all unless we are satisfied that the works are such that the cost may reasonably be thrown over a period of years. It must not be supposed that a loan is sanctioned for road-scraping or works of repair; they are all works of a substantial and permanent character, works for which a loan would be sanctioned unhesitatingly at any other period. The only question is whether in a very limited number of cases where works are specially proposed and carried out at a particular time for relieving distress the cost of the works may be somewhat more than if they were carried out at another

Chairman—continued.

period; but I should say that there have not been more than three or four instances where we have had any reason for suspicion that the total cost has been increased by that cause.

Mr. *Lawrence.*

624. Do I understand that you, as an administrator, are prepared year after year to suggest that public money should be borrowed to do work at an extravagant rate, and at the most expensive time of the year, and to charge it upon the rates; is that sound finance for a department to recommend?—I do not think you will find the department have recommended that.

625. What you have said is that you do not in sanctioning loans make any difference in regard to the time the work has to be done, which we all know in many cases is the wrong time for it to be done, and it is done by the least good men and in the most expensive way. Ought the cost of that work to be charged upon the rates for future generations to pay?—In the cases in which the Board sanctioned loans they have full details of the estimates; those details are submitted to the board's chief engineering inspector, and in every case having regard to the nature of the works and the estimated cost he makes his recommendation, and there is almost invariably a local public inquiry by one of the inspectors, at which every person interested may be heard. Moreover, he inspects the site, and locally ascertains the necessity for the works.

Mr. *Bousfield.*

626. Are those estimates based on the employment of ordinary skilled labour?—In the great majority of cases the estimates are sent in some time before there is any probability of pressure, and what usually happens is that the work is merely expedited. For any works of such a large and permanent character as would be required for a loan to be sanctioned, the engineer has to devise the scheme, prepare the specification, get out all the estimates before he can obtain our sanction to the loan; and it is only in a very limited number of cases that all that can be done so immediately as to make works that were not previously proposed available for temporary distress within a period of two or three weeks.

Chairman.

627. I suppose when, after full and sufficient inquiry, you sanction a loan for a work, the amount you sanction corresponds with the estimate your advisers have formed of the cost of the work?—Our engineering inspector advises the Board, having before him the full particulars of the estimate; but, as I have admitted, there have been two or three cases where there has been reason to suppose that there has been an increase of cost for the reason mentioned. There have been cases where, from one cause or another, there has been an excess over the original estimate, not necessarily owing to the class of persons who were employed, but partly at least owing to variations in the work, and the Board have been asked to sanction a supplementary loan for the additional cost. It is in those few cases, as I have admitted,

Chairman—continued.

mitted, we have had suspicion that there has been some increase of cost; but the board have not on that account reduced the amount of the loan.

628. Are the estimates modified by your advisers?—We have the original estimates, and the authority have to show under every head what the additional expenditure has been?

Mr. *Jackson.*

629. Do you ever modify the amounts in the original estimates?—Our inspector, after he has held his inquiry, may consider that the scheme is an unnecessarily costly one, and may suggest modifications which have the result of diminishing the cost; but we do not cut down the estimates of the engineer as to what the actual cost of the particular works will be. The usual thing is to find that the engineers have under-estimated, not over-estimated the cost.

Mr. *Lawrence.*

630. On page 204 of the Report of the Unemployed with regard to Watford you will observe that the "Engineer reports that the work at that time of the year cost about double what it would if done in summer with skilled labour;" with such facts before you, do you not think on consideration that in future, if loans are granted, there ought to be some allowance made for the mere discharge of local sympathy towards the unemployed, and that such allowance should be struck off the sum to be thrown upon the rates?—It is not to be assumed that the Board have sanctioned loans in all the cases given in this table.

631. I do not say that they have. I merely refer to this as a proof that work done in winter is almost certain to be done at a most extravagant and expensive rate.—In the particular case of Watford the whole cost was borne by the locality; there was no application for a loan.

632. As to the congestion of the unemployed, the circular generally advocates the local authorities finding work by various ways, does it not?—Yes, there are certain means of providing employment referred to in the circular.

633. Should you not be inclined to think that if Derby paints its asylum in winter, and Camberwell pays 8½*d.* per hour for inefficient winter work in painting, provincial painters will no longer remain in their own localities, but will come up to town and will not really lay by their summer resources to live upon in winter?—I should expect in both cases local labour would have the preference in employment, but sometimes there can be no doubt the more freely work is provided in particular districts at a time when work is ordinarily scarce the greater would be a disposition of persons to migrate to those districts.

634. You would agree, I believe, that the Mansion House Conference, in 1893, conducted most carefully an experiment for dealing with the submerged tenth, that is to say the unemployed?—Are you referring to the Abbey Mills scheme?

635. Yes. It was very carefully conducted, was it not?—Yes, it was, I believe.

Mr. *Lawrence*—continued.

636. Is it not the case that on inquiry as to the birth places of the applicants 61 per cent. of them were Londoners, and of 50 others out of England and Wales 36 were from urban districts, and only two came from the country?—Yes, that correctly represents the facts as reported by the Mansion House Committee.

637. Does not that indicate that the influx of skilled men from rural districts is submerging the lower class of urban workmen. If no rural workmen are found in the lowest ranks, does it not show that the skilled men come in and drive out the London workmen?—It should be remembered that the information given is merely as to the alleged birth places of the applicants. One quite realises that there is a constant drifting to London and other large towns from all parts of the country quite apart from any exceptional work that may be provided.

638. I was endeavouring to show that a high rate of the scale of pay is really prejudicial to the very Londoners themselves, because it tempts good men to come up from the country and take away the work from the lower class of Londoners, who sink into a still lower grade?—The greater competition that exists in consequence of the coming to London of particular classes of workmen no doubt materially increases the difficulties of the ordinary residents in London.

639. When your Department has before it knowledge of manifestly unwise expenditure by guardians or other local bodies calculated to increase the distress, does it in any way criticise such action?—The board have not criticised the action of the authorities.

640. Your Department has had experience, has it not, that relief works need not necessarily be a test of relief being wanted?—Relief works may be established without any absolute necessity, but the probability is against it.

641. Do you remember a case at Nottingham some time back where 1,396 men were discharged from the relief works, and only 27 accepted outrelief subject to a labour test?—No, I do not remember the facts of that particular case.

642. As to the worthy unemployed, to whom some honourable Member referred the other day, as an administrator you believe that inquiry is essential to the right-dealing with poverty, I presume. What means have local authorities other than the guardians to prevent themselves being imposed upon; have they any inquiry officers?—They have no inquiry officers, but the course that was recommended by the Board was that the guardians and local authorities should act in concert, and that the guardians should recommend to the local authorities the persons who should be employed by them.

643. So that the men should first apply to the guardians and get what some people call the stigma of Poor Law relief, and then be passed on to the vestry?—No, it is rather with the view of avoiding that, and in order that persons who the guardians thought could be more appropriately helped in this way should have assistance in connection with these works rather than be a charge upon the rates with the stigma referred to.

644. They must go first, must they not, to the guardians' offices?—Not necessarily. The relieving officer might be aware of the facts as

Mr. *Lawrence*—continued.

regards their circumstances, but, no doubt, in the majority of instances application would be made for relief.

645. Do you not think that it would weaken the Poor Law administration if municipal authorities should be looked to to find relief systematically for the unemployed?—There is no recommendation on the part of the Board that local authorities should provide relief systematically. All that has been done is to suggest that where there are works necessary for a district they should be expedited as much as possible in order that assistanee might be given to those who are unemployed.

646. I suppose you would allow that the issue of this circular pretty well three times within four or five years is becoming rather chronic. That if this course is generally adopted of urging local authorities to find work municipal authorities will be looked upon as another relief agency, and that, I presume, you would deprecate?—There is no doubt that the circulars have been issued at comparatively short intervals, but they were issued under circumstances which were considered to render their issue expedient.

647. Would not a dual authority as to dealing with distress be fatal to any systematic treatment of it, and have a serious effect upon the *morale* of the community?—I think myself it would be most unwise to have a dual authority administering relief; but what was contemplated by the circular was not that there should be two such authorities, but that one (the board of guardians) should be giving relief and that the other should, so far as the circumstances of the district rendered work necessary, give work.

Mr. *Billson.*

648. I should like to carry on the point that has been referred to about the Camberwell Guardians a step further. The Camberwell Guardians chose to consider that every case was urgent for a certain time; will they be surcharged?—It rests with the auditor to determine whether they will be surcharged or not.

649. I think there is *a provision*, is there not, in the Order that in every case where they treated the case as urgent they should send notice to the Local Government Board?—No; cases of sudden and urgent necessity are exceptions to the provisions of the Order; but, independently of those cases, the guardians, where they consider the circumstances are such as to render it desirable, may give relief in particular cases in contravention of the Order, subject to the sanction of the Local Government Board being given in those instances.

650. If they proceed week by week to consider the same cases as urgent, does that come within the exception?—No. I think not. I think that is inconsistent with the spirit of the Order.

651. That is what Camberwell has done, as I understand. I should like to ask, also, if there is any recognised definition of the term "able-bodied?"—As I have already mentioned, a person would for poor law purposes be regarded as able-bodied if he was ordinarily able-bodied, although at the time of application he was suffering from sickness which rendered relief necessary. What is looked at is

Mr. *Billson*—continued.

rather the ordinary condition of the person than the condition of the person at the particular time. An able-bodied person is presumably a person not suffering from such physical or mental defects as to render him unequal to ordinary labour in the labour market.

652. At Question 452, Mr. Pickersgill asked you whether a resolution of this kind would be in order: "That whilst this weather holds, out-relief be given to destitute able-bodied persons who have been resident for 12 months in the parish," and you replied that that would be illegal. May I ask whether, if that resolution had run in the direction of saying that out-relief should be given to all persons over the age of 60, you would consider that also was too general?—The question as to whether a person is able-bodied is a matter of fact in the particular case, but the age of 60 is usually taken by boards of guardians as the limit which, after it is passed, renders a person not able-bodied.

653. May I understand that the guardians would be in order if they statedly and deliberately gave outdoor relief to persons over 60 without applying the labour test?—I think you may say it would be legal, but in strictness the individual cases ought to be considered, because there may be some persons above that age who are practically able-bodied.

654. Are you aware that a committee sat in Liverpool last year with regard to this question?—I think there was one.

655. Have you seen their recommendations and their report?—I cannot say I have them in my mind now.

Mr. *John Burns.*—In deference to the wish of the Committee, and in consequence of the intended length of my examination of the witness, which cannot properly be taken at this stage, I will claim my right to examine him at a later period.

Mr. *Mather.*

656. I desire to put four questions with the object of eliciting from you, Sir Hugh, what may be regarded as a summary of the evidence that you have given, and by my questions to ascertain whether the Committee are justified in forming certain definite conclusions from the evidence. First, I would ask this: May the Committee conclude that taking all the statistics and letters you have received and means of observation you possess you are of opinion, so far as regards outdoor and indoor relief and means of employment to persons in a state of destitution who apply to the guardians, that there is nothing in the present situation, aggravated as it is, which the public authorities cannot meet under the powers they possess if they exercise such powers sympathetically, promptly, and efficiently?—As regards the guardians, my view is that looking to the regulations in force and the means at the disposal of the guardians, by reason of the contributions from rates which they can levy, they have powers and means sufficient to meet the distress at the present time, although the distress may be regarded as exceptional. It will be understood that I am limiting my reply to those who apply for relief

and

Mr. *Mather*—continued.

and simply speaking of the powers and duties of the guardians.

657. My question refers exclusively to persons in destitution—it is governed by the word "destitution." May the Committee conclude that you are of opinion that the guardians have power to deal with the present situation under the conditions named in the question—if they exercise their powers sympathetically, promptly, and efficiently?—Yes, understanding the question to refer to the cases which come before the guardians in consequence of destitution, that accurately represents my view.

658. My next question is this: May the Committee also conclude that you are of opinion, judging from data in your possession, that there is unusual and severe privation, not wholly due to the inclement weather, among the working classes who cannot be regarded as casual workmen or persons likely to apply for relief until the last extremity of sacrifice and suffering is reached, and that for such cases no obligation rests upon, and no powers are possessed, by the local authorities to meet the circumstances of this unemployed class who will not become objects of charity or pauper relief, beyond giving outdoor work which only unskilled labour is suitable for. Perhaps I had better divide this question, and I will ask you first: may the Committee conclude that you are of opinion, judging from the data in your possession, that there is unusual and severe privation not wholly due to the inclement weather among the working classes who cannot be regarded as casual workmen, or persons likely to apply for relief until the last extremity of sacrifice and suffering is reached?—I have somewhat studiously avoided expressing any personal opinion as to the extent of destitution above the pauper class. I thought it best to place in the hands of the Committee all the information that the department has, leaving them to come to their own conclusion, and I think when the Committee have before them the letters which are now coming in, they will have very ample means of coming to their own conclusion with regard to the question.

659. From your evidence we are not justified in gathering that in your opinion there is unusual and severe privation amongst the unemployed working classes; you do not desire us to draw that conclusion as being your opinion?—Generally what I have stated is this: that there is no doubt that the returns show that in consequence of the almost entire stoppage of outdoor work in certain districts there must be destitution; and, in addition to that destitution, there are particular districts where there is depression of the industries which form the staple work of those districts; but I hardly like to express any general opinion beyond that?

660. My third question is: may the Committee conclude from the answers which you gave during the evidence that the Local Government Board has not within your knowledge received any scheme from any society or individual under which provision is suggested by which the unemployed working classes may earn a living in times of bad work and depression of trade without

Mr. *Mather*—continued.

affecting the interests of those already employed?—I do not myself know of any such scheme.

661. My fourth question is for the unemployed working classes who fill special occupations, may the Committee conclude from your evidence that you are of opinion, judging from the experience you have had, that some modification of the poor law might be made that would enable such persons to receive substantial temporary work when long out of work under conditions that would not encourage improvidence, but would remove the prejudice and dislike they now entertain in applying for assistance in the present stereotyped form, and without impairing their rights of citizenship and doing serious injury to their home?—No, I am not aware of any alterations that can be made in the regulations issued by the Local Government Board with regard to out-door relief which could be made without risk of affecting the independence of those who now refrain from becoming a charge upon the rates.

662. You are not aware of any such modification?—I am not aware of any alteration of the regulations that could be made without the risk of diminishing the indisposition to apply to the guardians, and the risk of affecting the independence of the large mass of the working classes who will not become a burden upon others except under extreme necessity.

Mr. *Jackson.*

663. You have given us some very interesting figures about the increase in the number of applications in various unions, particularly in London; have you any information which would enable you to tell us whether there has been in recent years any considerable increase in the amount of the poor rate in the unions in London?—I may say at once that there has been a considerable increase in the poor rate expenditure in London. There have been several causes at work to account for that. In the first instance, almost every union and parish in London is provided with a separate infirmary, and the appliances of those infirmaries now are such as that in fact they are not very far behind many of the general hospitals; the improved arrangements for the sick have entailed a considerable additional cost; in regard, for instance, to the large staff of trained nurses in these infirmaries. Another cause of expense is the constantly increasing charge for lunatics.

664. Is that an increasing charge in consequence of the increasing number, or is it an increasing charge apart from the increasing number?—There is an increasing charge apart from the increasing number.

665. Is it in consequence of more care taken of them?—There is a much larger expenditure in adding to the comfort for the indoor poor than in former years—that is continually growing.

666. Can you give us any cases which would illustrate the increase in the poor rate in any of those unions, taking the worst of them, for instance?—I could easily obtain such a statement, but I have not a consecutive statement for a number of years of the particular unions.

667. Perhaps you would, with the Chairman's permission, put in such a statement; the object,

Mr. *Jackson*—continued.

as you will see, is to compare the increase of rate, and to see whether it corresponds with the increase of these applications at particular times, to ascertain whether there has been any real increase in the poor rates of those districts?—May I ask whether a statement of this kind will do: to give the mean number of indoor poor, we will say, for ten years in each of the five divisions in London, and then the actual cost in each of the years under the two heads of "In-Maintenance" and "Out-Relief."

667A. If you please; and could you give also the amount of the rate, because you will see the amount of the rate is affected not only by the increase of expenditure, but also, it may be, by the increase of rateable value or the increase of the assessment?—There would be greater difficulty in giving that, because there is not one equal rate throughout the whole of the Union—each parish has its own separate rates, and perhaps four rates in the year. It would be extremely difficult to get out that information.

668. I will be content with it in the form you suggest. Is there no one union where the rate is uniform throughout the union?—There would be single parishes which have separate boards of guardians where there would be but one rate.

669. Are any of them large?—If I may say so, it is extremely difficult to take the poor rate as a test, because the poor rate bears so many charges quite outside the relief of the poor. For instance, since the London County Council has been established the whole of the expenditure of the London County Council is included in the poor rate, and before the County Council was set up the expenses of the Metropolitan Board of Works were raised not by means of the poor rate, but by separate precepts issued to the local authorities. But we could do this: we could give what on the rateable value was the expenditure in the pound under the heads I have mentioned.

670. That would do for me?—We could do that without difficulty for 10 years, taking only the five divisions and not working it out for the union divisions, if that would answer your purpose.

671. If you please. There was some comparison made between St. George's-in-the-East and, I think, St. Olave's; I gather that the administration by the guardians in St. George's-in-the-East might be termed more strict, shall I say, than in some other districts?—St. George's-in-the-East, as regards its administration, has been very exceptional. It was the board of guardians in which Mr. Pell, whose name is well known in connection with poor law administration, was specially interested. He became a nominated guardian for the parish. There is also Mr. Crowther, a gentleman who has taken a great interest in the matter of relief. They arrived at the conclusion that in the interests of the poor and not with any view of merely diminishing the rates, the best course is to administer the law very strictly, and practically only to give relief in the workhouse. At the same time, they realised that there would be cases where the circumstances were such that it would be considered a hardship that the person should actually come into the workhouse; and with the view of providing for those cases there

Mr. *Jackson*—continued.

are arrangements between the guardians and certain organised charities with the view of those cases being relieved by the charities instead of becoming a charge upon the parish.

672. What has been the result of that administration; do you think it has resulted in any increased hardship to the deserving poor?—It has resulted in a very marked diminution in the number of persons chargeable, and I have no doubt it has had the effect of inducing persons who otherwise might very readily come upon the rates to make every possible effort before they apply to the guardians.

673. But do you think it has been done at the cost of the sacrifice of what I may call the interests of humanity?—My own view is that it has not been so; and that the gentlemen who have taken so great an interest in the question have been watching the operation of the system so carefully that they have guarded against those evils that might otherwise have been expected.

674. Does your experience lead you to the conclusion that in the interests of the poor themselves slack administration is not beneficial?—My view is that slack administration is certainly not desirable, but at the same time I think it would be dangerous to lay down any such rule as has been laid down in St. George's-in-the-East as a hard and fast rule, unless there were guardians who were making every effort to secure that no evil resulted in exceptional cases from the rule. They may be regarded as hard in taking the course that they do; but I am quite sure the reduction of the rates is a minor matter with them, and that their only motive is that they are most strongly impressed that they are doing good service to the poor by giving them every inducement to make every possible effort before they become a charge upon others.

Mr. *Whiteley.*

675. I believe you have received an answer to your circular from Blackburn saying there is excessive distress, and that the Mayor is now providing meals for 12,000 people a day?—Are you reading a copy of the letter received yesterday?

676. Yes. There are many works that Corporations might undertake in emergencies like this, I suppose; for instance, to take an illustration from Accrington, a Lancashire borough: "Cleansing of streets not usually undertaken by local authorities, laying out and paving of new streets, paving of unpaved streets, and making footpaths on country roads, spade husbandry on sewage farms, laying out of open spaces, recreation grounds, new cemeteries or disused burial grounds, providing or extending sewage works, and works of water supply." Those are works that a Corporation might carry out under circumstances like this, are they not?—Yes, those were the works specified in the circular.

677. In order to do that they have to obtain, have they not, temporary borrowing powers from the Local Government Board?—Some of those works are works for which no loan under any circumstances would be sanctioned.

678. Speaking

Mr. *Whiteley*—continued.

678. Speaking as an active member of a corporation, I venture to believe that a great many of these works are works for which temporary borrowing powers might be obtained from the authorities in London?—There are no works in that list which the authority could not carry out without coming to the department at all. It is quite true that when they propose to borrow for the work and throw the charge upon the rates of future years they cannot borrow without the sanction of the Local Government Board.

679. As a matter of fact, you receive an application from the town council of Accrington on the 10th September for these borrowing powers in order to carry out certain works, in which application it was distinctly stated that it was made in order to find employment for men otherwise unemployed owing to generel lack of employment in their district. Possibly you do not remember that?—I cannot say that I do.

680. I am informed that that is the case. That reply, according to my information from the town clerk of Accrington, was sent to you on the 10th September?—It may be so.

681. And up to the present time, the 20th of February (something like five months), no action has been undertaken by the Local Government Board; is that so?—I am unable to answer without referring to the papers. I can only say I am not prepared at present to believe that that is the case. I should very much regret to find that it was so.

682. This is a passage in the letter from the Town Clerk: "Up to this date, the 20th of February, the sanction of the Local Government Board has not been received, although a local inquiry was held by the Inspector of the Board on the 7th of December last at which inquiry no persons raised any opposition and the Local Government Board Inspector signified his approval of the works in question?"—I understood you to say there had been nothing done, but there has been a local inquiry apparently.

683. There has been a local inquiry at which the letter says the Inspector signified his approval, but the requisite consent for the works has not been given by the Local Government Board?—I am not in a position to state the facts, because I have not them in my mind at the moment.

684. My point is this: would it be desirable that some alteration of the law should be made in order to expedite matters in this and kindred cases, so that in view of want of employment power could be obtained quickly from the Local Government Board to borrow money in order to put various gangs of men upon certain works that are necessary for the borough or corporation?—Assuming that there has been the long interval that has been referred to, there may have been in that case reasons for it, but at the present moment I am unable to say what they are, because I have not the facts in my mind. As regards the general question as to whether it is not desirable in circumstances of emergency that some more expeditious mode of disposing of the case should be adopted, I can refer to two cases in the last fortnight where an application was made personally on one day, and the inspector went down to the district on the next day, and the loan was sanctioned within three or four days certainly.

Mr. *Whiteley*—continued.

685. I think, speaking with a considerable amount of knowledge, that is an exception, is it not?—Most certainly it is, but that was a case where it was alleged that the work was specially required, and they were desirous of proceeding with the work as early as possible. In another case, the case of Yarmouth, they applied for a loan for, I think, something like 4,000*l.* for different works. A loan of that kind and of that amount we should not sanction without a local inquiry: but what we did was, we sent down an inspector at once with instructions to him to ascertain whether there were any works about which there could be absolutely no doubt of an estimated cost, say, of 500*l.* or 600*l.*, so that sanction could be given as regards that amount without waiting even for the local inquiry which was to be held in about a fortnight, and the result of his going down there was that a loan of 600*l.* was sanctioned immediately.

686. Broadly speaking, in a case where your inspector finds no objection, would you not think it too great a lapse of time to pass in a case where the application is made on the 10th of September, and it is distinctly stated to be for the purpose of finding work for the unemployed, that no answer should have been obtained from the Local Government Board on the 20th of February this year, or something like five months after the application?—I have already said that I am not aware of the facts of that case; but I may say this: it is very unusual for the inspector who goes down to state to the local authority what is his opinion; but when he makes his report, his report has to be considered not only from an engineering point of view by the engineering inspector of the Board, but by the officers of the Board; and it is sometimes found that there are legal difficulties or other questions arise which the inspector who held the inquiry may not have had the least in his mind.

Chairman.

687. The town clerk of Accrington writes to me and says: "I may remark that such a great delay as this is of common occurrence, and during an experience of upwards of 10 years I do not remember a sanction of the Local Government Board being given for borrowing powers to carry out works of a permanent character as defined by the Public Health Act within from two to three months from the date of application. It will therefore be seen that the Local Government Board's suggestion is altogether unworkable and impracticable." That does not accord with your experience and knowledge of the facts?—I have stated what is the course which the Board are taking in these cases. They are being expedited, but the Board are not going to sanction loans without full knowledge of what the works are, and without being satisfied that the works are proper in themselves, because it is urged that they are for the purpose of giving work to the unemployed. Those investigations do in some cases take time, and there are questions which arise occasionally which have very carefully to be considered before sanction is given.

688. It would be undesirable, you think, in the public interests that these things should be hurried except in such cases as you have stated, where there is known to be an ur-

Chairman—continued.

gent necessity for immediate action; in ordinary cases it is desirable to do them deliberately and thoroughly?—We have been very sensible that there has been a longer time in many cases where applications have been made for sanctions to loans than we should have desired. There has been an enormous increase in the work of the department, not only in consequence of the increased activity of local authorities as regards providing works, but of the large number of new authorities under the Local Government Act of 1888. County Councils, for instance, have to apply to us for sanction to loans, and it is the same now in the case of loans under the Municipal Corporations Act. But some four months ago additional assistance was obtained with Treasury sanction, and the work is, I should say, closer up at the present time with regard to enquiries than it has ever been during the last 10 or 12 years.

Mr. *Whiteley.*

689. As a matter of fact, your staff of inspectors has been too small, has it not?—The work has got beyond our staff, but that is being remedied as far as possible.

Mr. *Bartley.*

690. Do we understand distinctly that the guardians have got ample power to give any relief to any extent provided they give it in the proportion of half in kind and half in money in the case of adult outdoor poor?—Yes.

691.—The popular idea that they are limited is not correct?—It is not correct.

692. You put no pressure upon them in any way to reduce the amount given?—No, we never have, except as I mentioned yesterday, when we have found the guardians have been proposing to give the same amount to all persons in the stone-yard without any regard to their necessities we have said we thought it was injudicious.

693. But even there you have no power to stop it, I understand?—We have no power to stop it.

694. Therefore, the amount given is entirely a local matter, dependent upon the elected guardians?—That is so.

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

695. As regards the works that you sanction, is there any specification concerning the rate of wages to be given, or is that a matter entirely left to the locality?—That is left to the locality, but if it were a case of road making, for instance, we should have before us the details as to the length in yards, and the cost per yard for channelling, how much for the paving and for the kerbing.

696. Do you exercise any control over the amount paid in wages?—We have not particulars as to the amount paid; we have simply the engineer's estimate of the cost under the several heads, and those estimates are submitted to our engineering inspector.

Mr. *Jackson.*

697. You mean that is so as to loans; you are not speaking of that which comes out of the current rates?—No; we have nothing to do with the ordinary expenditure out of the rates.

Mr. *Bartley.*

698. As regards the rate of wages in the case of loans, that is limited, is it not, entirely to the locality. These works for temporary purposes the locality can settle, and you do not interfere in any way with the rate of wages given?—That is so.

Chairman.

699. That, then, will conclude your evidence at this stage. We are extremely obliged to you for all you have done for us.—May I just be permitted to say this? I think my evidence has gone somewhat beyond what is usual with a witness from a public department. It has been ordinarily the case that the evidence of such witnesses has been limited to facts, figures, and practice; but I have been asked some questions which have been rather questions of policy. I should like it to be clearly understood that although it is difficult to dissociate oneself from one's department, the views I have expressed are simply my own views, and the Department is not in any way responsible for them.

Mr. James Keir-Hardie, a Member of the Committee; Examined.

Chairman.

700. The Committee are well aware of your interest in the subject before us, and of your intimate acquaintance with it—in many of its aspects at all events. I am ready to proceed in any way, but perhaps it would be most convenient to you if you simply made a statement of your views of the question, with especial reference to the matter of the interim Report that we are called upon to make?—Mr. Chairman, I desire first of all to correct, to some extent, the impression made by the evidence of the last witness—Sir Hugh Owen—as to the extent to which destitution prevails. He gave us what information he had, and gave it ably,

Chairman—continued.

but my point is that outside, what might be called the official view of the situation, there is a great deal of distress of which we are specially called to take cognizance. For example, I will take some of the larger provincial centres of population, and show, very briefly, what is the state of affairs in those. I may say, by way of explanation, that in practically every industrial centre in the country there is a more or less permanent unemployed committee, with which I am in regular correspondence, and the figures I am about to quote are given as the results of a circular which I sent out to these committees at the beginning

of

Chairman—continued.

of the present week. It may, perhaps, be the better way to read the questions put in the circular. It is headed "The Unemployed." First: "Name of town"; second: "Estimated number out of work"; third: "Principal industry"; fourth: "Are there any special local causes which account for the depression in trade"; fifth: "Has anything been done by any local bodies or private associations to meet the distress"; sixth: "What do you suggest could be done at once in your neighbourhood?"; seventh: "What could be done by the nation?" These were the queries put. I only purpose in the reply to give the figures supplied to me. Leeds I will take first.

701. May I just, by way of elucidating it, put this question. You say that every industrial centre has an unemployed committee; how is that constituted, and what is the nature of it?—It is constituted of delegates from trade unions, socialist organisations, and branches of the Independent Labour Party. These form the chief component parts of the committee. In some cases there are clergymen and outside sympathisers, who are also members, Bradford being a case in point.

Mr. *Mather.*

702. Are these delegates of trades unions duly appointed by the unions?—Appointed by the —it is as well to understand this—trades unions or by the trades council of the town in which the committee meets.

Mr. *John Wilson* (Durham).

703. May I ask whether you have any unemployed committee in the county of Durham; and will you say the unions from which the delegates come?—I do not know of any at this moment; but I will look it up and ascertain; I have not the list here. To show the difference between the estimate formed by the officials (the guardians and others) who replied to Sir Hugh Owen's circular, and the estimate formed by these committees, I will refer to page 7 (second column) of the minutes of the first day's proceedings. No. 1 minute, Question 25. The report from the guardians, which was read by Sir Hugh Owen in reply to Mr. Jackson, was as follows (about half way down the answer, beginning with the word "Neither"): "Neither do the guardians consider that there is distress of an exceptional character amongst the working classes who may not have applied for relief. Indeed, there does not appear to be so much local 'outcry' by and on behalf of the 'out of work' class as in preceding years." The report of the committee supplied to me on Thursday of this week was that in Leeds, exclusive of those in receipt of parochial relief, there were 8,000 persons unemployed. I asked the secretary to telegraph me this morning what the situation now was. This is his reply: "Lowest estimate of the absolutely destitute, 10,000."

Chairman.

704. To-day?—To-day.

Mr. *Jackson.*

705. Absolutely destitute?—Absolutely destitute, yes.

706. In Leeds, 10,000?—Yes, 10,000. That is the reply received this morning. Up to Thursday a relief fund had been opened, to which 4,500*l.* had been subscribed in the way of giving relief.

707. That is one of the funds, is it; or is it supposed to be the one fund?—The principal relief fund, presided over by the mayor.

708. The central relief fund?—The central relief fund.

709. Of course that does not include the whole?—Then Liverpool. This will be found in page 9 of the first day's evidence, Question 40, in reply to Mr. Lawrence, a good way down the Question: "In reference to your inquiry as to the existence of distress of an exceptional character amongst persons who have not applied for relief, the select vestry direct me to state that they do not feel that they have before them sufficient information to enable them to express any definite or reliable opinion upon the point. That there are amongst the class referred to many persons who are suffering great privations from want of employment, and the general slackness of trade, is unfortunately too true; but whether this distress can be considered exceptional, either in regard to its character or its extent, the select vestry have not the means of ascertaining." Now, sir, the secretary to the Dockers' Union, who is also the labour correspondent to the Board of Trade, telegraphs me this morning in reply to my inquiry: "Estimated number of unemployed, 18,000; destitute men, women, and children, about 15,000, apart from Poor Law statistics."

Chairman.

710. Do you mean 18,000 in addition to the 15,000?—I read it in that way, or it may mean that out of the 18,000 unemployed 15,000 are absolutely destitute. I had some little difficulty as to what the meaning of it was; however, I am willing to take it in that form, that out of the 18,000 unemployed 15,000 are destitute.

711. Would you read it again?—Certainly: "Estimated number of unemployed, 18,000; destitute men, women, and children, about 15,000, apart from Poor Law statistics."

712. Then the Poor Law would account for 3,000; is that what it means?—I have some little difficulty about it; I will take the 15,000.

713. May I ask: When you talk of there being at Leeds 10,000 and at Liverpool 18,000, does that mean all heads—all told—men, women, and children?—Yes; my query was, how many destitute persons there were—men, women, and children.

Mr. *Jackson.*

714. Surely that does not apply to Leeds—8,000 unemployed. You do not call children unemployed, do you?—The first figures quoted—8,000—represent the number of men out of employment. The telegram which I read supplementary from Leeds says: "Lowest estimate absolutely

Mr. *Jackson*—continued.

absolutely destitute 10,000." That applies to men, women, and children.

Chairman.

715. Yet the 8,000 unemployed might not all be destitute?—That may be.

Mr. *Jackson.*

716. Is there any classification of those into different trades?—No; there is a census being taken now.

717. How is the estimate arrived at?—By observation on the part of the committee; by the members who attend meetings specially called by the unemployed, and by the work of relief which is being conducted in Leeds and elsewhere.

Mr. *Lawrence.*

718. May I ask whether those figures which you have given are over and above those dealt with by the Poor Law?—Yes; in every case; that is the point of the enquiry.

719. You said in response to Mr. Jackson that the information was obtained by the attendance at meetings. I just want to know how that is?—And, by the relief given by the relieving committee, persons who are in receipt of parochial relief are not relieved by these committees.

720. How can they tell?—How can they tell! They have got a list; the committee supply tickets for the relief.

Mr. *Jackson.*

721. Is this Leeds still that you are referring to?—All round.

722. Which committee then; perhaps you would make that clear?—The relief committee. The central relief committee, under the chairmanship of the Mayor, in Leeds, in Liverpool, in Manchester, and the other large centres of population.

Chairman.

723. I am sorry to interrupt you, but just to make that clear let me ask this: This unemployed committee in each place not only is, as it were, with a view of collecting facts and watching over the interests of the unemployed, but actually giving them relief?—The custom differs. The committee was formed originally, not to give relief, but to collect information and direct an agitation towards securing provision being made for the unemployed. Since the exceptional weather set in the committee in Manchester, in Leeds, and in other places has also been engaged in collecting money and giving relief. Then Glasgow; we had no evidence from Glasgow, only I quote this to show that in Scotland as well as in England there is a large number of people who are destitute, "5,000 destitute families."

Mr. *John Wilson* (Govan).

724. Is that in Glasgow?—Yes, in Glasgow, "8,000 unemployed. This is understated."

Chairman.

725. Who is that telegram from?—From George Mitchell.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

726. Who are all the telegrams from?—The one from Liverpool is from James Sexton.

Mr. *Bartley.*

727. "This is understated," does it say?—Yes, "underestimated"; all Scotchmen like to be cautious. I will give the names if they are desired.

Chairman.

728. I do not think the names are desired. In Glasgow you say there are 8,000 unemployed?—Yes, "5,000 destitute families." The Press of the different localities I have referred to give corroborative evidence of the extent of the distress. In Liverpool, quoting from the "Liverpool Courier" of February 18th, the Rev. Charles Garrett says: "My missionaries are devoting the whole of their time to this work, and as far as the means permit are especially caring for the women and children. We have personally relieved more than 2,000 cases." From the "Courier" of the same date, a descriptive report, written by one of the reporters I presume, says: "There is no police duty to do now" (these are the words quoted of a police constable), "Our chief work is to act as a kind of relieving officers and also disperse anarchists. There never was, perhaps, in the history of the force so few cases of offences against the law in the city of Liverpool as at present." This was an observation by an experienced and leading member of the Liverpool police force on Saturday at one of the relief stations. There is no doubt that his statement is accurate, and it certainly illustrates a very remarkable condition of things. "There is, without doubt" (this is the point of the quotation) a very large amount of destitution caused now by lack of employment and other influences."

729. That is from a paragraph in the "Liverpool Courier" newspaper?—Yes.

730. Not an editorial?—No, not an editorial; it is under the heading "Relief of the unemployed." From the same paper of the 19th February I take this: "Heartrending scenes of hunger and misery are no doubt to be met with daily in different parts of the city. The police and other distributors of relief were again exceedingly busy all day yesterday. The police stations and other centres of charity-giving were besieged at an early hour by large crowds of hungry and cold men and women pleading for tickets for soup and bread. The usual scenes were also to be witnessed opposite St. George's Hall, where distributions in kind were again made from various sources." It is also reported in the "Courier" for the 20th that a deputation, representing the Social Democratic League, the Unemployed Association, and the Fabian Society, waited upon the Select Vestry: "Mr. Goodman" (one of the deputation) pointed to the vast amount of distress which existed in the city, and said it was computed that altog ether there were 50,000 skilled

Chairman—continued.

skilled and unskilled labourers out of work in Liverpool."

731. Fifty thousand?—Fifty thousand.

Mr. *Billson.*

732. Who was it who said that?—Mr. Goodman. Mr. Goodman represented on the deputation the Social Democratic League. That is taken from the "Courier" of February 20th.

Chairman.

733. Did you say 15,000 unemployed?—50,000.

734. The numbers given before were 18,000.—Yes, I am aware of that. I am merely quoting these to show that the figures already given are corroborated, and more than corroborated, from other sources. I might go on, Mr. Chairman, multiplying cases of this kind, but I will take one more case only—that of West Ham. It was commented on that no reply had been received to the circular sent out to the West Ham Guardians. I may be allowed to say, unofficially, that the guardians and the corporation had already informed the Local Government Board that there was nothing in the circular which they were not already doing, and nothing which was at all sufficient to enable them to cope with the distress prevailing in the neighbourhood.

735. Still, that is no reason for not giving us the information we asked?—I do not mean the circular sent out by this committee; I mean the circular sent out by the Local Government Board. The circular from this committee will doubtless be replied to in due course.

736. Well, as to West Ham, what do you say?—The Trades Council of West Ham undertook a census of the entire borough during the month of January this year. A large number of workers were employed distributing papers of which *this* is a copy: "West Ham District Trades and Labour Council, census of unemployed, January, 1895." Then follows the name of the street; the number of the house; number of families living in one house; number of workers (male, female); number between ages of 11 and 16; number over 16; number in full work, in casual work, and out of work, together with the trade or calling of persons out of work. The result of the census showed that of those visited 44,690 were workers in the sense of being wage earners; of this number 28,383 were in work, full work; 6,176 were casually employed; and 10,131 were out of work. I may be able by to-morrow to give the occupations of those out of employment. I expected to have had the information for to-day. Now, sir, in the face of distress like this, the guardians, with all their powers, find themselves unable to cope with it. Yesterday, whilst the Committee was meeting, I had a deputation waiting upon me here from Edmonton, where a meeting of 1,500 unemployed had been held on Tuesday night. A deputation was appointed to wait upon the board of guardians at its meeting on Wednesday—the Tottenham Guardians. The guardians referred them to the vestry committee, and the vestry committee agreed to find work for 50 men at 4d. per hour and two days' work a week. This, of course, was totally inadequate to meet the requirements of the case, and a second deputation was sent to the guardians to inform them that the whole of the remaining 1,450 desired to be admitted to the workhouse or to receive out-door relief; but neither of the requests were granted. That is fairly typical of a large number of districts in the Metropolis and elsewhere. In West Ham, for example, the workhouse is crowded, and the guardians are unable to deal with the distress.

Chairman—continued.

Mr. *Jackson.*

737. Does this represent the statement of the guardians?—No, this is the statement of the deputation which waited upon me yesterday. I may say that I informed Mr. Shaw-Lefevre of the facts, and he has promised to communicate with the guardians to have the matter investigated. I was about to observe that there is great reluctance on the part of respectable workmen, even when reduced to great straits, to apply for relief from the guardians, inasmuch as it disfranchises them. I find that one member of one board of guardians, the Chester Board of Guardians (Mr. Vernon), moved (this is taken from the "Liverpool Courier" of the 22nd of this month): "That the Local Government Board be requested to give permission for the temporary relief of the needy destitute without the necessity of disfranchisement, and if they cannot give an order to this effect to take the shortest possible way to do so, either by an Order in Privy Council or such other way as they may deem best." "The motion was carried unanimously." I submit that, as a proof that some boards of guardians, at least, are at one with the workmen in thinking that they should not be disfranchised as the result of receiving relief. Then, sir, I may indicate—what is well-known to all the Members—that all over the country special relief committees are presently at work. In Glasgow 8,500*l.* have been subscribed for this purpose; in Huddersfield, 956*l.*; in Bradford, 1,400*l.*; and in Liverpool, in Leeds, and in Manchester there are also "unemployed" funds. One result of the distress prevailing, directly traceable to the lack of the means of subsistence, clothing and food, due to the present number of unemployed, is the large increase in the death-rate during the recent frost. In Glasgow the death-rate for last week was at the rate of 43 per 1,000 per annum; the average for the corresponding week in the three last years being 20, 22, and 22.

Chairman.

738. I do not wish to put, as I told you, controversial questions at all, at this stage at all events; but there is nothing to associate that with the lack of employment necessarily; I mean we all know that keen weather like this finishes off a number of old and delicate people, which would of itself raise the rate considerably?—No, there is nothing in the report from which I have quoted to connect it; it is a reasonable inference however. There is one point, sir, on which I would like at this stage to offer a remark. It may be assumed that the distress now existing is due to the severe weather; and I admit at once that the severe weather has very largely increased the amount and accentuated the distress prevailing

Chairman—continued.

prevailing throughout the country; but it would be a mistake to assume that when the severe weather has passed the distress will have passed with it. In every large centre of industry there will remain when the good weather sets in a large number of persons unable to find employment, and whose lot will probably be worse than in ordinary years in consequence of the charities of the neighbourhood being exhausted to meet the exceptional distress now prevailing. Here is the resolution, for example, sent by a meeting of the dockers of Hull, which refers to this matter: "That this meeting of dockers of Hull draw the attention of the Unemployed Committee to the terrible number of dock labourers in this town who are workless, and the consequent amount of suffering that exists, and respectfully request the Committee to receive evidence from this port, from those competent to speak, as to the condition of dock labourers. We would further point out that the greater number do not seek parochial relief, and that therefore it is impossible to obtain anything approaching accurate statistics from the Boards of Guardians; also that the distress is by no means confined to the winter months, but exists to a large extent throughout the year." That very fairly summarises the reports from other places, that the distress will not pass away with the passing away of the very severe weather. Such, sir, in brief, is the case, from my point of view, which this Committee has been brought into existence to suggest remedies for. May I now call attention to sub-section D of the terms of reference to the Committee: "To make an interim Report to he House at the earliest possible date on what steps should be taken, either by Parliament, the Departments of State, or local authorities, to meet the distress this winter." Now we are nearing the end of February, it must be patent to those who have listened to the evidence of Sir Hugh Owen that local relief works cannot be established without very considerable delay. That, I think, came out very clearly; and if the unemployed are to be dependent upon these for relief, then there is small chance of relief for them "this winter." Now, sir, there are, as I have said, at present in every large town what one might call a central official relief committee. They are more or less under the chairmanship of either the Mayor or some responsible public man in the town, and if these could be kept in existence and supplied with the means to meet the distress during the present winter it would tide it over until this Committee had reported finally as to what should be done to permanently meet what is a permanent and chronic evil. What I would suggest would be that a sum sufficient to meet the requirements of the case, say, one hundred thousand pounds, should be set apart by the Treasury to supplement local effort in dealing with distress. It might be done in this way, although I am not tied up as to methods: that where a locality, either through the rates or by voluntary contributions, raise a given sum, an equal amount should be paid from the Treasury. I would make that apply to local improvements for which no loan is required (road making and mending) as well as to charitable relief.

Chairman—continued.

739. You would count, in estimating the amount raised by the locality, an equivalent to which is to be given from the central exchequer—not only the money spent in actual charitable relief, but money spent upon such public works as do not require a loan; that I understand?—Yes; mending roads, and making roads, and that sort of thing.

740. Although it brings in a return to the locality, still it should be reckoned as if it had been spent for this purpose by the locality. That, I understand, is what you mean?—It would encourage localities to undertake works which are necessary, but which may not be undertaken unless some inducement be held out. Relief from this source would not disfranchise the recipients; and persons who would rather starve than apply to the Poor Law would be relieved. It would be necessary to impose a residential test—say six, nine, or twelve months' residence in the locality—to guard the committee against imposition; and any person in receipt of parochial relief would be excluded from the benefits. One thing more this interim Report might recommend: that the clauses of the Poor Law or Franchise Acts (whichever they may be) which disfranchise recipients of local relief should be suspended in the cases of those men who, by reason of being out of employment, have accepted work under a board of guardians; otherwise the disfranchisement for this year would be very great indeed. Now it will be seen (and with this I conclude) that the gist of the statement is that provision should at once be made to insure that people who are hungry shall be fed. I admit it runs counter to all that we have been hearing from the very able official of the Local Government Board, and probably to all the traditions associated with this kind of work; but the case is exceptional, and until this Committee has made its final Report and its final recommendations, it seems to me to be necessary to take some step to provide against actual starvation. I am not wedded to this proposal, nor to any other, the one thing necessary being, I repeat, to see to it that with plenty abounding in the land there should be no unnecessary starvation.

Mr. *Logan.*

741. I did not quite understand you. You propose to supplement by an Imperial grant to existing local authorities any sum which those local authorities may raise for the purpose of relieving the unemployed; is that so?—Yes.

742. With that money these committees are to set to work the unemployed?—Where it can be done immediately.

743. But how do you propose to deal with the skilled man—the skilled artizan—who is now out of work; how do you propose that these local authorities should find him immediate work?—I have already said that there is great difficulty, and the final Report of this Committee will, I anticipate, deal with the whole question. What I am now proposing is a temporary means of meeting the distress. If no proper work can be found for these men, then relieve their necessities, either until this Committee has reported, or until they find other employment.

Mr. *David Randell.*

744. Do I understand you to say that the proposal you have made is a temporary measure, or that it is intended to be of a permanent character?—Purely temporary—to meet the distress "this winter."

745. And as a question of precedent as regards Imperial aid, I take it that you have some recollection of a proposal of the present Government to grant a sum of 80,000*l.* to relieve immediate distress in Ireland?—To advance a loan to that extent, yes.

746. In the event of this Committee not seeing its way to advise immediate relief, what would you recommend?—I would recommend the unemployed to take whatever action might be necessary to break down the existing system of poor law relief in order to bring things to a crisis.

747. That is to say, that you would recommend an organisation of the unemployed to appeal for relief at the various workhouses—assuming that as a matter of course it would be physically impossible to grant them that aid. In your opinion the present poor law system would naturally break down?—I think it would under the pressure.

Mr. *Crean.*

748. Do I understand you to mean this grant of a hundred thousand pounds to be a free grant?—A free grant. Yes.

749. Does it strike you that a few centres might, if they chose, start works for the benefit of those centres and monopolise the whole sum?—Yes, that did occur to me; but I think it could be met in this way: by limiting the amount given to any locality to a given sum per thousand of the population. Suppose we said 20*l.* per thousand—that is to say, that no locality should be entitled to receive from this central fund more than a sum equal to 20*l.* per thousand of the population.

750. Have you estimated what would be an average, or an approximate average, of what amount would really meet the present depression in the United Kingdom, at that rate?—At that rate I believe it would require, supposing each locality claimed its full share all over the country, considerably over half-a-million. I am not assuming that each locality would do so, and I have named a sum which, in my opinion, would enable the localities to tide over the distress of this winter.

751. Does it not strike you that any locality (and all localities), however well-to-do, would be very anxious to get a free grant to the extent of a hundred per cent. of what they would wish to lay out themselves, and that we would be immediately flooded with applications for money, even though the distress existing in some centres was not very great for the sake of the free grant, as an advantage to the locality itself?—The locality would require to show that distress did exist in its neighbourhood, and that the work was being undertaken primarily for the relief of such distress, before obtaining any grant.

752. What test would you apply, and how could you apply the test?—Test of what?

752A. As to the objects for which they required the free grant?—The opinions of the responsible officials, both for the administration of the poor law and of municipal affairs in the town.

Mr. *Crean*—continued.

753. But in reply to a question of mine yesterday, the Secretary of the Local Government Board informed me that he had no way of checking those returns that he received?—*He* had no way; but, supposing this to be agreed upon, some machinery would be necessary to put it into practice, and that is a detail which could easily be met and overcome by the appointment, say, of an inspector who would require to be satisfied that the distress did exist.

754. You stated, in answer to a question of mine, that the estimate would probably amount to 500,000*l.*, that is, half-a-million of money?—If the entire country claimed its full share.

755. In the event of any money being claimed over and above the estimate you have given of what would be actually necessary for the present want, how could you meet that?—You could safeguard yourself in making the grant by providing that in the case of any false statement being made the Treasury should have power to recoup itself from the local authorities.

756. It need not altogether necessarily be a false statement to enable local authorities all over the United Kingdom to start works immediately, and to exhaust the fund of 500,000*l.* which you have estimated the whole would come to?—I think it would be possible; if the money was not being spent to relieve distress it would be a false statement, and if localities did start works in excess they would require to pay for them themselves.

757. You believe, then, that it would be possible to form some board of supervision that would check any attempted imposition on this relief fund?—I do.

758. Could you briefly outline the nature of such a Board?—The Treasury Department, by means of a special committee, might easily check all such applications without creating any new machinery other than the special committee for this purpose.

759. Do you notice that the Treasury or any other department of the Government are very loth to go outside the regular routine of the business for which they are responsible at present?—Yes, that is why we are here to-day.

760. I will give you an instance: Mr. Morley, himself, in applying for the relief of which you have spoken, the 80,000*l.* which would have to be paid off in full in a period of two years by those receiving it, had to apply for special powers to employ men to deal with this money and to enable him to pay those men; therefore he had himself to go outside the regular established boards which are at his disposal at present; and my question is, if he had to go outside the poor law boards, and establish other boards, who would have the distribution of that fund, and for which it was necessary to get a special Act to employ special men to do it, I want to know from you, Can you say that at present the established boards here will undertake a greater and more extensive question than that which is at present imposed upon them?—I can only say, in reply to that question, that the Treasury and all the Departments are the servants of the House of Commons, and if this Committee recommended, and the House of Commons endorsed, a certain course of action, it would be for the Department

Mr. *Crean*—continued.

affected to take steps to carry it out; and they would do it.

761. Do not take me as objecting to this; I want to know really how it would work out, and whether it would be effective in meeting the present distress, as I believe, myself, it scarcely would be?—That I understand.

Mr. *John Wilson* (Durham).

762. In reference to the unemployed committees, will you give us the localities in which they exist, that is, the unemployed committee, formed of delegates from trade unions and Social Democratic Federations. Can you tell us the localities in which they exist?—I can tell you some—Glasgow is one.

763. My remark applies more particularly to the county of Durham?—I will undertake to supply a list to-morrow, if that may suit your convenience; I have not a list here at present.

764. Just one question anent this sum. I understand it to be 100,000*l.* you said?—I merely mentioned that. I will take as much more as is necessary.

765. If I might so put it, you would take any larger sum?—I will be quite content with that to begin with.

766. Can you show to us how it would be adequate to meet the employment of all the men who are unemployed?—I did not say it would. I said that the gist of my suggestion was a temporary expedient to tide the suffering poor over the present winter. I did not say it would provide employment, and I do not want that construction put upon my words.

767. May I ask you, as you have got the figures, what is the sum total of the unemployed according to your returns?—The returns are not complete yet, but the sum total will not fall far short of a million and three quarters.

768. How long will that hundred thousand pounds employ them?—I did not say that it would employ them at all; I object to that construction being put upon my statement.

769. Let me put my question fairly; you said that you would recommend, as an interim Report, that a hundred thousand pounds should be given as an auxiliary—I will put it in that way—to help the local resources. Now, how long would a hundred thousand pounds added to local efforts employ the million and three-quarters?—I did not say "employ;" I said "relieve."

770 How long would it relieve their immediate necessities then?—It would depend on the amount given.

771. A hundred thousand pounds, and a million and three quarters of unemployed. How long would the hundred thousand pounds relieve the immediate necessities of the million and three quarters?—I have not made the calculation, but at the rate at which relief is now being given it would probably last out until the end of March, until the severity of the winter was over and the Spring months brought extra employment.

772. Then we are to understand that this Committee are to recommend a hundred thousand pounds as being the sum to feed a million and three quarters of people for two months?—No; the proportion of the million and three quarters who are destitute.

Mr. *John Wilson* (Durham)—continued.

773. I would like to have a degree. Let me suppose a case which comes, I think, within the knowledge of you and myself. Take a mine, where the men are working a day, or two days, a week; would it be competent for these men to claim a share of the 100,000*l.*?—No.

774. Then a man would have to be entirely out of work?—Yes.

775. Although he might be destitute, or nearly destitute, working a day or two a week, and paying his share of this 100,000*l.*?—Yes.

776. And yet not be allowed to get his share out of it?—Yes.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

777. Were you acquainted with West Ham prior to becoming its Member in 1892?—For two and a half years previously I was.

778. In what way?—As a candidate.

779. As a candidate for West Ham?—Yes.

780. Will you tell the Committee whether this enormous number that you have given the Committee this afternoon of unemployed (10,000 odd, I think it is—10,131—out of work) are inhabitants of West Ham?—They are all inhabitants of West Ham; if they had not been they would not have been on the census; only householders were visited in West Ham.

781. May I ask you whether this number of 10,131 inhabitants out of work—actually unemployed—in West Ham has been verified by anyone in an official position?—It has been accepted by the Corporation, and embodied in a petition.

782. It has been accepted by the Corporation?—Yes, it has been accepted by the Corporation.

783. And by the guardians?—I do not know whether it has been before the guardians, but it has been accepted by the Corporation and embodied in their petition to the House of Commons.

784. Are you in communication with the guardians as to this unemployed question?—Not at present.

785. You have very rightly, I think, taken the matter in hand for West Ham; may I ask you whether you have included any of the large divisions of the Tower Hamlets (seven in number) which, I think you will admit, contain a much larger population than West Ham?—I do not quite catch the drift of your question.

786. It is this—whether you have taken into consideration the large number of unemployed in the seven divisions of the Tower Hamlets, which, as you know, are adjacent to West Ham?—Yes, I have.

787. Have you come to any conclusion as to the number of unemployed in those seven divisions of the Tower Hamlets?—I believe it is very large. I would not like to commit myself to a figure, but I know it to be very large.

788. You know that West Ham does not come within the metropolitan area for the large amount of moneys which are handed over for the purpose of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund and the indoor pauper grant, under the Equalisation of Rates Act?—No, it does not.

789. Are you aware that out of the twenty parishes who are receiving this large sum of money—531,000*l.*—in some of these parishes the guardians do not know how to employ the money?—No, I am not aware of the fact.

790. You

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

790. You are not aware of that?—No.

791. Then you think that if you had a large sum of money granted to West Ham it would not be employed in the same way as the money which has been granted to St. Olave's—namely, 23,000*l.*, which has been employed by indiscriminate labour?—I do not think it would. A residential test, as I think I said, would be imposed, and only persons (as is the case at present in the relief works which are established there) who had resided a certain length of time in the borough of West Ham would be entitled either to relief or to go upon the relief works.

792. Are you acquainted with the charitable institutions of West Ham?—Slightly.

793. Have you any idea of the amount of money which is raised every year in that locality for charitable relief alone?—No, I do not think that it could be ascertained; it is a very poor neighbourhood.

794. I know the neighbourhood?—It is a very poor neighbourhood, and the amount which can be raised in that way is not so large as in many other parts, both of the metropolis and of the country; but everyone does what they can, and there is a great deal of private charity; men who are in work helping those who are out, with no one knowing anything about it.

795. Have you any relief societies in West Ham doing at the present moment a vast amount of good work?—Yes, we have.

796. And these 10,131 unemployed who are now out of work do obtain relief from those societies?—Part of them, but very inadequately.

797. Now will you kindly tell the Committee what you propose to do (supposing the Government were to advance this hundred thousand pounds) with the portion of that money which would go towards West Ham?—I would hand it over to the town council, to be disposed of by that body as it deemed best. I may say that there is in West Ham an unemployed committee of representatives from the guardians, from the corporation, and from various agencies within the borough, and these take control of practically all that appertains to the unemployed.

798. Then will you kindly tell the Committee what portion of the 100,000*l.* you think would be required for West Ham?—I have already said that a limit would require to be imposed to prevent one locality obtaining more than its share. The guardians, I believe, and certainly the unemployed committee, have said that 20*l.* per thousand of the population would go a long way towards enabling them to meet the distress.

799. How much do you expect to get of that hundred thousand pounds?—About 4,500*l.*

800. 4,500*l.*, to be distributed amongst the 10,000 unemployed?—Yes.

801. For West Ham only?—Yes. That is, supposing that the full limit was to be obtained. Supposing the amount obtainable by a locality was 20*l.* per thousand of the population, and that the full limit was obtained by West Ham, it would amount to about the sum I have stated.

Mr. *Round.*

802. Have you any special information about any parts of Essex other than West Ham?—From time to time I have letters from residents. I have one this morning, not from Essex, but from a locality not unlike it—Steeple Claydon, in Buckinghamshire. Mr. Llewellyn Davies, the vicar of Steeple Claydon, fills in the return I sent to him as follows: "Estimated number out of work, 45 out of 100 workers"—that is to say, that 45 per cent. in Steeple Claydon are out of work, the principal industry being agriculture. Now, I know that in many of the villages in Essex the number out of work is quite as large, if not larger, than the figures here reported.

Mr. *Bartley.*

803. I should like to ask you about this hundred thousand pounds, and what it would do. If there are a hundred thousand heads of families out of work, would you consider that about half-a-million of people?—A hundred thousand?

804. About four to five to a family?—Yes.

805. About that?—Yes.

806. Then 100,000*l.* would only give those 4*s.* a head; is not that so?—How many do you say out of work?

807. Do you consider that 100,000 is quite within the mark as the number of people out of employ according to your estimate. I understood you to say that some of the million and three quarters about which you were asked by the honourable Member for Durham were not destitute?—That is so.

808. What I am driving at is to show that this 100,000*l.* would last no time. Do you consider that this 100,000*l.* when divided amongst the 100,000 unemployed would really last any time at all?—I believe that the 100,000*l.* would tide over the worst localities during the continuance of this month, and the whole of next month; if not, then the same principle would enable a further grant to be made. I do not fix the hundred-thousand pounds arbitrarily—I merely take it as a round figure; I believe it would be sufficient; if not, then more would require to be applied for.

809. You mean to say that as soon as this hundred-thousand pounds was used your scheme would be to have another hundred-thousand pounds?—Yes, if necessary.

810. And another after that?—Yes.

811. So that, practically speaking, you mean an unlimited amount from the public taxation?—Yes, I mean that until we have found work for these people we are under an obligation to feed them, without imposing any disqualification upon them: they are not out of work as a consequence of any fault of their own, and should not suffer any disabilities from being out of work.

812. Have you sketched out in your own mind how this money would be distributed; would it be given to them in any ratio to the wages which they earn in their trades, or would it be given as a capitation grant?—I should say more in proportion to the size of the family.

813. Would it bear any proportion at all to the wages they earn when at work?—Well, the committee might have discretionary powers.

814. Would it be as much as their ordinary wages, or less?—No, it would be a case of relief, not wages.

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

815. Do you know that the rateable value of England and Wales is about 150 millions?—I was not aware of the exact sum.

816. That is about the amount; would not, therefore, an extra penny rate produce six times as much as this grant?—It might, but the difficulty is that localities without some special encouragement do not respond so freely as they ought to do, and besides, a special rate of this kind could not be imposed for relief purposes. The guardians could not give it, we have been told, without disfranchising the recipients; the vestries and corporations have no power to give it; and therefore there is no means of obtaining it save by voluntary subscriptions.

817. Do you suppose the Treasury have the power to do this; would it not require legislation?—I would assume that the Treasury would be under the control of Parliament, and if this Committee made a recommendation to that effect, and it was endorsed by the House of Commons, then a Bill would probably be necessary to empower the Treasury to make the grant.

818. Then when you say you wish this hundred thousand pounds (we had better have it clearly stated), you mean to say that, practically speaking, an unlimited amount is to be advanced by the State until everybody has got employment?—Yes.

819. That is your proposal?—Yes; until the State provides work for everyone requiring it, the State is under an obligation to keep them from starving; that is my position.

820. Does not the Poor Law do that now?—No; not without imposing disabilities which should not be imposed.

821. Then how are you to distinguish between those who should apply to the Poor Law and those who would apply to this fund?—I would leave the discretionary power in the hands of the committee. If a person was well-behaved, and out of employment through no fault of his, that one fact would entitle him to relief; if he was out of employment in consequence of misconduct, it would be otherwise.

822. Do not you think, if the locality could claim an unlimited amount of money from the State for those persons who wanted relief, or employment, whichever way you put it, in a very short time the whole Poor Law would cease, and the rates would be so far relieved, and that the whole cost would be thrown practically upon the State?—No.

Chairman.

823. To assist the matter, may I put it in this way: your proposal is that the grant should only be in proportion to the amount raised by the locality; that is so, is it not?—That is so, only it might be raised by the rates or by voluntary contributions.

Mr. *Bartley.*

824. You would allow local contributions to count if it were rates?—Yes.

825. Then would not that practically amount to halving the rates so that in future half would be raised by the State and half by the locality?—Until work had been found.

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

826. Until everybody had got work?—Yes.

Chairman.

827. Well, until the excessive destitution was over, do not you mean?—I said in my chief evidence that I limited it to this winter, in the expectation that this Committee would make its Report.

Mr. *Bartley.*

828. My whole course of questioning was this: to show that the need went on; because you particularly said all through your evidence that this distress was not simply the consequence of the weather but a chronic difficulty; and I was pressing you in order to see whether when this hundred thousand pounds, or whatever was granted, was gone, more would be required; and I think you will bear me out that you meant that that was to go on after the severe weather had ceased?—Yes, that is so.

Mr. *Whiteley.*

829. Approving, as I do, in some measure, of your suggestion, and knowing the exceptional distress that exists, I ask you: Do not you think it is a weakness on your part to contend that money should be given to local authorities to meet, and to equal money that they spend upon local improvements; and for this reason: that thereby the local authority would obtain some profit from what is a national source and get work done for half price?—I had this in my mind: First of all, as I have already said, to encourage local authorities to begin works; secondly, that Local Authorities do not get full value from relief works, and if they knew that the loss which they have hitherto had to bear would be covered for them in starting those relief works they would be the more readily inclined to undertake them.

830. As I say, approving of your suggestion, I think that is a weakness in it. You think that to provide for the distress in certain localities is a very heavy burden on those localities, although that distress has occurred from no causes under their control?—Yes, that is so.

831. And that the nation should assist in those peculiar localities?—Yes, that is so.

832. On the question of this 100,000*l.*, seeing that the Mayor of Blackburn now is distributing 12,000 meals a day, or 84,000 meals a week, at a cost of 400*l.*, your hundred thousand pounds would provide 21,000,000 of free meals—by a proportion sum.—Yes.

833. I have worked it out.—No doubt that is so.

834. And that hundred thousand pounds would have to meet the same amount of free meals supplied by localities?—Yes.

835. So that, practically, a hundred thousand pounds would go a long way?—A very long way in the matter of relief.

836. Do you approve of the suggestion that the procedure of the Local Government Board should be expedited so that borrowing powers for public works generally should be quickly obtained by local authorities?—I do.

Mr. *Mather.*

837. I only want to be clear about this,—whether your limited scheme for the moment desires that the whole of this sum of a hundred thousand pounds, or such part of it as may be claimed by local authorities, added to equal contributions in the aggregate, should be spent in food?—Chiefly in food.

838. Chiefly in food—not in finding work at all?—That is my idea; that it should be spent chiefly in food.

839. And is it your view that in cases where work might be ready for men to undertake—if there were some means at the back of the local authorities to put them on to it—some portion of the fund might be used for that purpose?—That is so.

Mr. *Mather*—continued.

840. You would limit your scheme then for the moment, as regards the hundred thousand pounds, to the actual distress supposed to be prevailing at the present time?—Yes.

841. Say for the next few weeks?—Yes; I would say until the end of March.

842. You will not carry it beyond that?—Not at present.

843. I understand that the hundred thousand pounds you limit to the period, say of the next month or six weeks?—That is so.

844. And that any further development of your plan you leave to further discussion and further application?—That is so.

Monday, 25th February 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Acland.
Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. Billson.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. Bousfield.
Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Crean.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Mather.
Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. Round.
Mr. Whiteley.
Mr. John Wilson (Durham).
Mr. John Wilson (Govan).
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. JAMES KEIR-HARDIE (A Member of the Committee), further Examined.

Mr. *Jackson*.

845. IF I understood your evidence on the last occasion correctly, you brought forward certain figures, with regard to industrial centres in the country, with a view of showing that outside of what you call the ordinary Poor-law relief there is considerable distress existing; and a considerable number of persons unemployed, to whom temporary relief is urgently necessary?—Yes.

846. And you were good enough to give us some figures with regard to some of those industrial centres, including Leeds. I want to ask you one or two questions about that. You told the Committee that you had sent out a circular, and you gave us certain figures which you described as the results of that circular having been sent out?—Yes.

847. You mentioned Leeds, and you quoted a telegram; you did not tell us whom the telegram came from. I do not ask the name of the sender, if there is the least objection to saying whom it is from?—There is not any objection.

848. Will you kindly tell us who the telegram came from?—From Mr. Tom Maguire, who is a member of an unemployed committee in Leeds.

849. You said you would be good enough to put in lists of the committees; can you do so now?—That has slipped my memory.

850. Possibly you will put that in later?—I will.

851. That telegram was: "Lowest estimate of the absolutely destitute, 10,000." That is referring to Leeds. That is stated at Question 703, in answer to the honourable Member for Durham?—Yes.

852. Would you be good enough to tell the Committee what you understand by "absolutely destitute"?—The phrase was not mine; I was quoting from the telegram.

853. I quite appreciate that?—I would understand a person to be absolutely destitute who is unable to procure sustenance.

Mr. *Jackson*—continued.

854. You told us also that a relief fund had been opened to which it was stated £4,500 had been subscribed in the way of giving relief; would you think the case was met of the urgent temporary relief that you desire should be given in such districts if it could be shown that every applicant had been relieved?—If he was relieved on the day on which the application was made, Yes.

855. And carrying it a point further than that, if a committee had been formed, say, in Leeds, with funds at its disposal, so that every case coming to the knowledge of the committee was relieved, would that, in your view, dispense with the necessity of what I may call a grant from Parliament?—If the cases were being properly relieved it would do so; but may I supplement that by saying that in many cases the funds only supplied one meal per day. I would not call that sufficient relief.

856. Quite so; but supposing the committee were sitting every day, and were relieving and supplying the wants of every applicant, would you say that that was sufficient?—If they were supplying their wants, Yes.

857. Are you aware that in Leeds there has been formed in every ward, and in almost every polling district of the whole district, relief committees which have had placed at their disposal by the central committee, and from the central fund, in addition to the funds supplied purely locally, means by which they have been able to relieve the case of every applicant that has come before them?—I am not personally aware; but I would accept that as being so. One of the statements made through my evidence was that the acute distress prevailing during the frost had drawn out a large amount of charity, which would stop when the distress resulting from the frost was over, and that the position of those left out

Mr. *Jackson*—continued.

out of work then would be relatively worse than if the acute distress had not existed.

858. But do you not think that the acute distress was entirely due to the frost?—No, I do not at all.

859. But you are aware, are you not, that, so far as Leeds is concerned, there was no very strong evidence of any acute distress until towards the end of January?—No; all my information goes the other way.

860. Could you give us any information that tends in any way to minimise what I have suggested as being the fact?—The fact that personally I have attended meetings of the unemployed in Leeds, that an agitation has been going on on behalf of the unemployed during the whole of the present winter; and if I may be allowed to quote this letter from the sender of the telegram, Mr. Maguire, it will throw some light upon the question. This is a quotation from his letter dated February 20th: "On Wednesday, the 6th instant, a deputation from the unemployed waited on the City Council, and after stating their case were advised by the Mayor to apply to the Poor-law authorities for relief. They did so that very afternoon, when the clerk to the guardians told the deputation that the Sanitary Committee of the City Council was the proper authority to apply to for relief work. All that the guardians could offer was test work at 6d. per day, with two loaves of bread. (In the Hunslet Union, same borough, the test labourer gets 2s. 6d. a day of seven hours.) Naturally the unemployed refused to work for 6d. per day, which, as one of them expressed it, was simply working to pay the landlord his rent, and, as the workhouse is full, the unemployed have turned from the guardians in disgust." Then further on he states: "As to the distress in Leeds, it is unquestionably keener than at any period since 1875, when a relief fund of 5,000*l.* was raised. There have been four unemployed agitations here since 1886, but not one of them ever reached anything like the magnitude of this. In one morning" (he does not give the date unfortunately) "we registered the names of 1,778 men, and in the afternoon as many more turned up. That gives some idea of the unusual amount of distress."

861. That letter is written on the 20th of February, I understand?—Yes.

862. Therefore, that does not, I think, you will see, minimise what I say, namely, that there was no special knowledge of any acute distress until well into January. I quite agree, you understand, that at the period when that letter was written, acute distress had arisen; but my point is that when the acute distress did arise, ample means and funds and organisation were provided in Leeds in order to relieve those cases?—I would submit that it would be desirable, in matters of this kind, where a local knowledge of all the circumstances is necessary, that local witnesses should be examined upon the point. I have given a general statement, and as in all probability local witnesses will be required to be called, it would probably save the time of the Committee if they were examined upon the statement which I have made.

Chairman.

863. I do not think we can contemplate local witnesses from every locality that is brought into question, but what we thought of having were witnesses from typical localities, and Leeds might do for one as being a large centre of industry?—Quite so.

Mr. *Jackson.*

864. I am quite content even to leave it where it is, if I may be allowed to call a witness from Leeds to show what has been done. I understood your view was that the Committee should report to Parliament, and that Parliament or the Treasury should immediately vote 100,000*l.*, in order to meet what you believe to be the pressing urgency of the case at this moment?—That is so.

865. Probably you would agree that if it could be shown, taking your own illustration of Leeds, that there are ample funds at the disposal of a committee, which has no other object but to meet the case fully, then, so far as a vote of Parliament is concerned, that would not be necessary as regards Leeds?—That would be so.

866. If the same thing could be shown in other cases, I presume you would equally be satisfied. I am quite willing to leave the case where it is. I thought it desirable, as far as I could, to make the case clear as regards Leeds that not only had there been no neglect, but that there had been every effort made—and successfully made—that was necessary in order to meet what we all admit to have been exceptional distress arising from the prolonged severity of the weather. I am not dealing at all with the question of Poor-law relief, because that, as I understand, you put aside as being outside this particular question?—Yes, quite so.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

867. Have you any information from Sheffield?—No, nothing special.

868. Have you any at all?—I do not think I have at this moment; my recollection is that the report has not been returned from Sheffield.

869. That is true, but I wanted to know whether you could give us any report?—I mean my own report has not come in yet.

870. Can you tell the Committee what places you consider from your information to be the most acute cases?—I named several on Friday; you will find them, I think, in the evidence.

Chairman.

871. You did not quote them as the most acute, did you; you quoted them as instances of what was going on?—Yes; the reason being, of course, that in those places the distress was bulking very largely, and that the evidence given by Sir Hugh Owen seemed to indicate that there was no exceptional distress in those places.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

872. May we take it that those places which you selected on Friday—Liverpool, Leeds, and Glasgow—are the worst?—They are amongst the worst.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley*—continued.

873. Could you mention any other locality equally bad or worse?—In the North of England, where the ironworks have been closed; round Darlington way there is a good deal of distress prevailing; in Newcastle there is distress arising from want of employment; in Sheffield there is distress arising from want of employment.

874. A Mayor's fund has been started at Sheffield, I suppose you are aware?—I understand so. I do not care to speak as to Sheffield without having the information definitely. I have asked for it.

875. All those you consider tolerably bad cases from the information you have had?—Yes.

Mr. *Jackson.*

876. I find in the Leeds "Daily News," of Saturday, and I daresay it has appeared on other days, there is actually an announcement of the place in every ward of the City where relief can be got under the heading of "Where relief can be got," giving the address of the local committee in every ward, and the hour in the day at which relief can be obtained. Will you kindly look at that (*handing a newspaper to the witness*)?—Yes. My point was that as soon as the acute distress had passed away so too would the committees, and leave the ordinary unemployed in a very difficult position.

Mr. *John Wilson* (Govan).

877. Reference has been made several times to Glasgow, and I think you stated to the Committee on Friday that there were 8,000 unemployed, and 5,000 destitute families in Glasgow; I think in that you understated the case?—I read a telegram to that effect from Glasgow.

878. You also stated that the fund raised by the citizens amounted to the sum of 8,500*l*?—Yes, at that time.

879. Since you stated that I believe it has been increased considerably, and is now nearer 10,000*l*?—That is very likely.

880. I suppose you are aware that apart from this fund the Corporation opened up in different parts of the city an opportunity for men to get employment in breaking stones?—Yes.

881. And that over and above the money that has been raised for the purpose of meeting the distress there have been a great deal of provisions tendered to the Corporation for those who were relieving the distress, and not only provisions, but clothing and fuel. Is that so?—That is so.

882. So that so far as the destitution is concerned it has practically been overcome by the generosity of the citizens?—It has been very largely met during the frost.

883. You are aware, I suppose, that in Glasgow the building trade, prior to the severe weather coming on, was in a very healthy and prosperous condition?—Fairly so.

884. And so was the shipbuilding industry, was it not?—No, I would not say so; it was better than it had been.

885. Upon the whole they were pretty well employed, were they not, upon the reaches of the Clyde?—There were a large number out of employment all down the Clyde.

Mr. *John Wilson* (Govan)—continued.

886. At all events, during the severe weather neither in building house property nor in building ships could they then work on account of the excessive cold; they could not handle the iron, and the builders could not, of course, manipulate their materials, and the result was that a great many people were thrown out of employment?—Yes.

887. Does it strike you that when once this severe weather is over, which we all hope it is now, there will be a very great demand for labour?—Those formerly occupied, who were thrown out by the frost, will again find employment.

888. Do you think, so far as Glasgow is concerned, the citizens generally have really done their duty in the matter?—So far as meeting the distress arising from the frost, they have done fairly well.

889. And not only have they done this, but they have also soup-kitchens, have they not, in every part of the city, which soup-kitchens are administering to all and sundry that come before them?—Yes, they have.

Mr. *Acland.*

890. You told us that one of the questions which you put to your committees was: "Are there any special local causes which account for the depression in trade." I suppose that question had reference to causes outside the frost?—It was meant to have.

891. Can you give us any of the answers which you have had to the question?—I will read a few I have here, just taking them as they come. This is the answer from Consett and Blackhill. "Estimated number out of work, 500. Principal industry, iron and steel, new railway cutting." To the question: "Are there any special local causes which account for the depression in trade." The reply is: "The severe weather is mostly responsible for unemployed here, with shipyards being idle has thrown mills slack; all outdoor work is stopped." That seems to be a case for which the frost was responsible. Then taking Brighouse. "Estimated number out of work, 600. Principal industry, textile and stone quarries." "Loss of trade and displacement by machinery" are given as the local causes for the depression.

Chairman.

892. What is the date of that reply?—These replies were all received last week. Then as to Sevenoaks, as to the estimated number out of work, the reply is: "Can't say. A large number. Principal industry, villa residence and agriculture." The local causes for depression given are "Depressed building trade, low agricultural prices making the farmers turn off many men in November—the bad weather." Then taking Stafford: "Estimated number out of work, 150; principal industry, boot trade." The special local causes are given as: "Frost stopping County Council's buildings, sewerage works; boot trade being season's trade is fairly employed just now." Darlington: "Estimated number out of work, 1,000; principal industry, iron and steel works." Special local causes: "The entire closing of a large steel works." Carlisle:

Chairman—continued.

Carlisle: "Estimated number out of work, 1,500; large proportion owing to weather." No special local causes are given. "Morriston, Wales. Estimated number out of work, 500 to 1,000; principal industry, tinplate works." Special local causes: "Depression in the tinplate trade." Rochester and neighbourhood: "Estimated number out of work, 1,000; principal industry, manufacture of cement." No special local causes are given. Dundee, from 1,000 to 2,000 out of work — principal industries, jute-weaving and spinning, and engineering and shipbuilding—special local causes: "Indian competition largely developed of late (one mill near Calcutta working 22 hours daily). Some heavy failures recently caused by rash speculation." Ipswich, "2,000 out of work. Principal industry, iron founding and clothing making. Special local causes: This being in the midst of a purely agricultural district, it necessarily is more directly affected by the depression in that industry than many other towns. The weather is keeping a very large number of bricklayers and masons and carpenters out of work who may resume to an extent when weather breaks." Preston, a "modest estimate," the writer says, "of the men out of work is 3,000. Principal industry, cotton." No local causes are given. "Halifax, 1,000 adult males out of work; principal industry, engineering, worsted, carpets, and stone-quarrying, brick-making, etc." In answer to the question:—"Are there any special local causes which account for the depression in trade," the reply is: "No; it arises from general depression, but the severe weather has intensified matters somewhat." "Hulme, City of Manchester. Estimated number out of work, 5,000, or 42 per cent.; principal industry, building and iron trades." "Frost and monopoly of industries." By the phrase "monopoly of interests" is meant the private ownership of industries.

Mr. *Jackson.*

893. You have not a reply from Leeds, have you?—Yes, I have one from Leeds. I thought I read it on the last occasion. This reply was received on Thursday of last week: "Leeds. Estimated number out of work, 8,000 (during frost); 5,000 without counting outdoor workers. Principal industries, iron, leather, building, and clothing. Are there any special local causes which account for the depression in trade? No. The iron trade includes all branches; wages are low, yet there are 330 Amalgamated Society of Engineers' men out of work, and society men (trade unionists) are only one in five." Then the reply goes on to state the relief works.

894. There are no special local causes given there?—No; just general depression in trade.

Mr. *Acland.*

895. When you speak of the immediate relief that is necessary, I understand you to include amongst those who need it, both those who are out of work because of the frost, and those who are out of work from other causes, such as depression of trade, or the departure of trade from the district?—I was specially thinking of those who are out of work from other causes than the frost, which I assumed would pass away, but the other causes would remain.

Mr. *Acland*—continued.

896. As regards figures you mentioned, when you gave us the figure of one million and three quarters, would that include those out of work from frost or not?—I would say not. I was trying to form an estimate of those who would be left out of employment when the frost had passed away.

897. There would be a very large addition to the one million and three quarters if you included all those who were out of employment because of the frost?—Yes, there would.

898. If we take the case of West Ham, where there are 10,000 out of work, would you say that the 10,000 were outside those who ar eprevented from working because of the frost also?—Yes, most of them.

899. Therefore, there would be a considerable addition to the 10,000 in West Ham, in consequence of the prevalence of the severe weather?—Yes.

900. If we take both those figures of one million and three quarters for the country at large, and 10,000 for West Ham, would those be heads of families?—Not all of them.

901. Some would be heads of families, and some would be members of families?—That is so.

902. Would it be right to say they would be the workers in the families?—Yes; but in some cases, as you will understand, there may be one of the workers in the family in work, and another out.

903. But I understand it would not include little children, for instance?—No, I mean the workers.

904. Sometimes the father, and perhaps one or two sons in the family may all be out of work?—Yes.

905. Sometimes out of three workers two may be out of work, or one may be out of work, but what you are speaking of are the workers I understand?—Yes.

906. By what figure do you think that your figure ought to be multiplied to show the number of persons affected, including wives and children?—The way I usually make the calculation is to assume that one-half of those out of work are married, and heads of families, with an average number of dependents of three children and the wife; therefore, I multiply half the total by that figure, that is to say by five.

907. And half the persons would be unmarried?—Yes, I assume that.

908. Half the persons would be married, and the average family of the married persons you reckon as three children and the wife besides the head of the family; is that right?—That is the basis that I took for my calculation.

Mr. *Bousfield.*

909. That is the same as multiplying the total figure by $2\frac{1}{2}$?—Yes.

Mr. *Acland.*

910. Therefore, the total figure of one million and three quarters in the case of the country at large, and 10,000 in West Ham, should be multiplied by $2\frac{1}{2}$ approximately?—Yes.

Mr. *Acland*—continued.

911. That represents the total number of persons who belong to out of work families from causes outside the severity of the weather?—Yes.

Mr. *Bolton.*

912. It is nearly 6,000,000, is it not?—Yes.

Mr. *Acland.*

913. The total figure would be approximately 25,000 for West Ham, would it not, and over 5,000,000 for the country as a whole?—Yes.

914. If an Imperial fund were provided in the way you suggest to meet the local contributions, what would you think should be the minimum grant during the next four or five weeks to the persons of whom we are speaking. For instance, if you were on a Joint Committee administering this fund at West Ham what would you give, in the first place, to the single unemployed men in order to meet the present necessities?—I would not advise the giving of money payments as a form of relief, either for West Ham or anywhere else. My idea was to see that the people were fed until work had been found for them, or they had found work.

915. Have you formed any estimate of what it would cost to keep a single man going for a week in that way with food?—It would vary according to the persons in charge. I believe that in West Ham they are able to do that kind of work at a very little cost, as the relief work is conducted very largely on vegetarian principles. In West Ham a very small sum, probably 3*d.* per day, would give a good wholesome meal.

Mr. *Whiteley.*

916. Cannot you get, at soup-kitchens, meals for a little over a penny?—You can. You can get a supply of soup and a piece of bread at soup-kitchens at a cost, I believe, of just about a penny; but I was assuming a meal, not merely a supply of soup and a piece of bread.

Mr. *Acland.*

917. Of course, one meal would not be sufficient; I think you said so just now?—Yes.

918. Supposing there were two meals at least, that would cost sixpence?—If you allow 3*d.* for each meal; but the second meal need not necessarily cost as much as I said; but I have no objection to putting it at 6*d.* per day.

919. That would be the cost for a single man out of work?—Yes.

920. Then, in a family averaging five persons, including the children, what should you say would be the cost of the food they would require—would it be about 6*d.* a head?—Roughly speaking, yes.

921. That would be about 2*s.* 6*d.* a day for a family?—Yes.

922. In fact, I suppose you may say, on a rough average, you would want about 7*s.* a week for each unemployed, whether with a family or without a family?—It could be done for very much less, but I would not advise it being done for less.

Mr. *Acland*—continued.

923. Then, if that is the case, I do not quite understand on what basis you say that 100,000*l.* would be enough to begin with?—If all the persons who are out of work, with all their dependents, were to be provided, the sum would be miserably inadequate. I merely gave it as an instance of what I thought should be done immediately, when I said that a grant from the Treasury should be made to relieve distress. If 100,000*l.* is insufficient, I have no objection at all to the figure being increased.

924. Supposing such a committee of the Treasury, as you spoke of the other day, were sitting, it could not possibly give this 100,000*l.* on the principle of first come first served amongst the localities, could it?—No.

925. It must look to localities broadly, and try and deal fairly by them all, if it was a State grant?—I would assume that such a committee, supposing it to be in existence, would be very largely guided by the decisions of the Committee meeting here to-day.

926. It seems to me if the figure of 5,000,000 persons is correct, if you made it 5,000,000*l.*, that would only represent 1*l.* per member of the family, which, at the rate we were speaking of just now, would last perhaps about three or four weeks. I think that would not be very far wrong, would it? £1. per person would not last, at all events, much more than the time for which you want this special relief?—It would not, if the allowance was made on the scale that we have been speaking of.

927. Perhaps I ought to admit this, which I have not carried into my calculation, that half the money must come from local sources?—Yes.

928. Supposing I put it in that way, and say 2,500,000*l.*, it seems to me that that would be almost the minimum that it would be possible to offer the localities, if any attempt was going to be made to meet the case for the next three or four weeks?—You are assuming, for the basis of your calculation, that each person would come upon the fund for relief; that is not the case, and would not be the case—only those really destitute would be relieved from the fund. In West Ham many of the 10,000 who are out of work will find a casual day's employment here and there, which would go to reduce the number drawing upon the fund.

929. Then the 10,000 persons may be unemployed on a given day, and some may be employed again the next day?—Yes.

930. You think that would relieve the fund to a certain extent?—I know it would, very considerably.

931. But, at any rate, with the large figures we are dealing with, if the country was to be surveyed as a whole, surely 100,000*l.* is a mere drop in the ocean?—Yes, it is a very small sum considering the requirements of the case, but the trades unionists, or many of them who are out of employment, receive out-of-work pay from the unions; they would not come upon the fund. Others draw upon their own resources until those are exhausted; those would not come upon the fund immediately.

932. Do you include in the 10,000, or the other estimate, a member of a trades union which is giving

Mr. *Acland*—continued.

giving out of work benefit?—Yes, all who are out of employment.

933. Such a man may be getting 5*s.* or 7*s.* a week?—Yes, or 8*s.* in some cases.

934. Up to 10*s.* a week?—Yes.

935. You would still include him?—Yes.

936. After all, the total number of unions who give such benefit is not very large, is it?—Not amongst the people who are mostly affected by the want of employment—unskilled labourers.

937. The proportion of those receiving such benefit is rather inconsiderable over the whole total, is it not?—From the unemployed point of view, yes, with the exception of two trades that have been rather badly hit of late—the compositors' trade and the engineers.

938. I suppose the compositors' trade is one of those trades where the rapid development of invention has really had a very severe effect upon some of the workers?—Yes.

939. It is one of those cases where workers, who are skilled workers, become unemployed through no fault of their own whatever?—Yes.

940. And where the development of machinery puts them out altogether of what was, when they were at work upon it, a rather highly paid trade?—That is so.

941. When you spoke about the disfranchisement of a worker if he accepts relief such as we have been hearing of in the stone-yard or elsewhere, is that one of the principal reasons why you urge a State grant?—It is one of the reasons, another reason being that the class of employment provided in the stone-yard is of the most demoralising kind to the persons engaged, and of a most irksome kind to those who are unaccustomed to that class of work.

942. I understand that the immediate relief which is to be given in food would cease shortly, and then again you would have the question of your unemployed before you once more?—I would expect that by that time this Committee would have made its Report. This suggestion is a temporary expedient to tide the unemployed over until this Committee has made its final Report. It is not to be taken, and I hope it will not be assumed, that this is a suggestion for meeting the permanent unemployed difficulty.

943. I quite understand that. What I meant was that your feeling about the stone-yard was that it would not in any case meet the case of a certain number of unemployed of whom you spoke?—Quite so.

944. But the disfranchisement is, in your mind, a very strong argument against persons who are out of employment, through no fault of their own, taking that form of relief at all?—Yes, a very strong argument.

945. If they did not lose their Parliamentary vote that would to some extent, would it not, lessen the objection which you have to that form of relief?—Yes, it would.

Mr. *John Burns.*

946. When was your census of unemployed taken in West Ham?—During January of this year.

947. That would be during the frost that started on 4th January, would it not?—The Trades Council state that the figures were not largely influenced by the frost. I cannot say when the frost started. I was not in London at the time.

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

948. Is not your district, like almost every district on the outer Metropolitan ring, largely resided in by men connected with the building of houses, and works and manufactories on the outside ring of London?—Not so largely, perhaps, as some others in the East End of London. The population is largely employed about the docks, and formerly was largely employed in the Thames Iron Works Shipbuilding Yard. Of course, we have a fairly large proportion of builders and builders' labourers in the borough.

949. Is it not the fact that, in West Ham, at this time of the year, a considerable reduction in the number of physically strong able-bodied men takes place by the shifts at the Beckton Gasworks being considerably increased?—Yes, that is so.

950. And that acts as a safety valve, does it not, to a great extent, from November to March?—To some extent.

951. Are the trades connected with the river particularly depressed?—I should not say they were specially. The information supplied to me by persons on the spot is that taking this year with other years, whilst there is more depression this time than others, it is not so very marked as to account for the exceptionally large number that are estimated to be out of work.

952. But is it not the experience in the case of men who have an intricate knowledge of the river-side and water industries that abut on West Ham that the frosty weather has been mainly instrumental in increasing the number out of employment?—Certainly the frost increased the number very considerably.

953. Would you regard this as a fairly typical statement: There are 400 barge builders in London, and out of that 400, 250 are entitled to unemployed benefit, and of that 250, 85 were on the books on Saturday last, and 50 besides those who were not entitled to unemployed benefit were also out of work. Do you think that 145 will be at work now that the ice has left the river and the frost has disappeared?—I could not say at all.

954. Is that the experience of your committee?—Not to that extent.

955. Would not that apply to lightermen as well as to barge builders?—If those men were unemployed in consequence of the frost, of course they will be now in work.

956. Consequently you would think, would you not, that what applies to barge builders would apply to lightermen who work the barges, and the disappearance of frost has minimised considerably the pressure on you at West Ham?—It has to some extent.

957. Did you, in your census, specify trades and classes?—May I say I had no connection with the census at all, but I will show the Committee a copy of the census paper. I can read the headings of the columns and hand in the table, if it is desired. First of all, the name of the street is written at the top of the paper.

958. I will be content if you will hand the form in. (*The Witness handed in the following form*):—

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

WEST HAM DISTRICT TRADES AND LABOUR CONNCIL.

Census of Unemployed_____January, 1895.

Name of Road or Street_____

No. of House.	Number of Families.	Number of Workers.	Male.	Female.	Between 11 & 16.	Over 16.	In full Work.	In casual Work.	Out of Work.	Trade or Calling of Persons Out of work.

959. I notice on your census paper no account was taken of the men who were questioned who belonged to trades unions, friendly societies, or clubs, or were dependent upon relatives for their means of support?—No; no account was taken at all.

960. Would you regard the figures I have given you with regard to barge builders as fairly applying to those skilled trades where the men belong to unions, friendly societies, and out-of-work clubs?—Do you mean as to the proportion receiving relief?

961. Yes.—I would rather not commit myself to a statement.

962. Was any attempt made to differentiate between those who would take work of any kind if offered to them and those who would not work at all?—No; there is only one way of doing that, and that is by providing work.

963. Are you aware that it was found at the Abbey Mills experiment, and from the experience of Toynbee Hall unemployed works and the Mansion House relief works, that that class of person, whom we must admit unfortunately exist, averaged 44 per cent. of the total number of applicants applying for work?—I would not like to accept the figures (I know they have been put forth) as being accurate.

964. Generally speaking, do you find in your district that the members of trades unions, members of Oddfellows, Foresters, Hearts of Oak, and similar associations very rarely apply for relief work, or for private or public charity?—That is so.

965. Are you aware that of 5,730 of those at Ipswich last year only 10 workmen applied for private or public aid?—I should say it was extremely likely. I do not know the facts.

966. I gather from you that you specially sympathise at this moment, as we all do, with the unorganized men who are too poor to organize themselves into unions and friendly societies and with the chronic unemployed rather than with those casually out of work through the frost, is that so?—Yes.

967. Do you think that anything of a casual spasmodic character in the way of relief to local rates, and a subsidy from an Imperial fund, would provide a permanent remedy for the chronic unemployed?—No, I do not; I have specially said so.

968. If you admit that, would you not rather leave to the guardians, to the West Ham Town Council, and to private and public charity, acting in relation with each other, the temporary alleviation of the distress of the chronic unemployed?—No, I would not. May I supplement that answer by saying that the guardians and the Corporation of West Ham have both declared their inability to deal with the distress existing in West Ham.

969. Then I am to gather from you that what you would recommend is the disbursement of a certain amount of money, it may be 100,000*l.*, or it may be half a million, through the agency of a Treasury Committee to exceptionally distressed districts, guided to some extent by the deliberations and advice of this Committee?—To meet present distress, yes.

970. Are we a competent tribunal to advise anyone in the disbursement of money?—I think we could advise. We could undertake to hear evidence from the localities making application, and decide on the strength of that, whether the Treasury would be justified in including them among the distressed localities.

971. Do

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

971. Do not you think that the members of this Committee, being human, would be rather prejudiced in favour of their own districts?—Very likely. I should not be at all surprised, but the members from any one district form a very insignificant minority of the Committee.

972. Am I to gather that a local authority is to be encouraged either not to use its present powers, or not to specially exert itself, but is to wait until a subsidy is given to the local rates?—No, I do not say they are to be encouraged to wait.

973. Would they not wait?—They are waiting.

974. Are they not waiting in the expectation that this Committee will do what they themselves ought to have done long ago?—I do not admit they are waiting for the Committee to do what they ought to have done. They are waiting for this Committee to do what the State ought to have done before, viz., to assist the local authorities in meeting this very difficult problem.

975. Can you give us an instance in which distress in local areas, for meeting which there is proper machinery either through the guardians, the town council, the vestry, or the sanitary authority, has been relieved by an Imperial subsidy?—No, we are trying to establish a precedent through this Committee.

976. Do not you think that the fact that it has not been done hitherto is a warning that it should not be attempted?—I do not think anything of the kind.

977. Are you not apprehensive that in helping workmen for a month by an Imperial grant and subsidising the local rates you will debauch them for a generation?—No, they are being relieved at present by charity. If any debauchery is to accrue it is going on now. I think that to take the case of an honest, decent fellow out of work, to relieve him without compelling him to go upon the rates is to prevent him being demoralised rather than to aid in his demoralisation.

978. Upon that point, have you read the report of the Toynbee Hall Unemployed Committee two years ago, signed by the Rev. S. A. Barnett and Mr. Sidney Webb, and concurred in by nearly every political economist, and socialist and labour leader?—I read the report at the time, but I have not seen it since.

979. Did you take special notice of this paragraph in it: "That anything of the nature of a 'Mansion House Fund,' for the relief of distress, or any new fund for the irresponsible and indiscriminate provision of meals, lodging, or other doles in the distressed districts would, in our opinion, inflict a cruel injury upon the inhabitants of these districts, and seriously aggravate the disease"?—That is because it would attract outsiders; that is the mischief.

980. Do you endorse that opinion?—I endorse that opinion if the relief is to be confined to one district. If the authorities in one locality exert themselves, and provide either relief works or indiscriminate charity, of course outsiders will be attracted to that locality. That is one of my reasons for saying that this is a State question, so that distress may be dealt with all round, and not merely in certain localities.

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

981. But how do you discriminate between the evil consequences of the Mansion House Fund in 1887, that supplemented what local authorities did or did not do, and the money granted by the Imperial authority, that in its operation would have precisely the same effect?—I do not admit it would have precisely the same effect, for this reason: the Mansion House Fund, in 1887, was confined to London, and attracted people from all parts of the country towards London; but if a similar fund had been at the disposal of the authorities all over the country, the men who came here would not have been attracted, and the evil would not have arisen.

982. That can only be provided after our Interim Report, by means of some permanent scheme; but assuming that this committee of the Treasury which has been spoken of selected 20 distressed areas in Great Britain and Ireland, and sent down 5,000*l.* to each of those distressed areas for immediate relief, would not those 20 distressed areas, subsidised by an Imperial contribution, act as a sponge towards the surrounding districts that had no contribution. Would it not, in a word, act to each of the 20 districts as London did in 1887 to the whole country?—To some extent it would do so.

983. Now, I want to know what West Ham has done to grapple with the exceptional distress?—It might be as well that you should have the reply to that question officially. The officials of the Corporation have been summoned to attend before this Committee, and they will be able to state with more accuracy and more detail than I could what has been done.

984. I do not ask for details—I will get those from the officers; but, to your knowledge, what has West Ham done generally to meet the case of distress among the 30,000 of its inhabitants which you made the prayer of a Petition which you presented on its behalf?—The guardians have opened a stone-yard, and the Corporation is laying and re-laying streets and making roads which require to be made, and a private committee is at work laying out Wanstead Flats, and finding employment for some men.

985. In all, how many men are being employed, roughly?—Probably, or I may say certainly, under 1,000.

986. What has the district done to your knowledge to follow the example of other districts, which I need not mention, to allocate its public work and to meet the exigencies of the depressed state of private trade outside?—The public works in West Ham are neither so extensive nor so numerous as in other districts. I believe the Corporation officials, in laying out work, endeavour, as far as possible, to place it at the time when it will be most required to meet the distress in the district.

987. Am I to gather from you that all that can be expected from West Ham in the way of adapting its public work to depressed trade in the way of immediate relief works, and the granting of in-and-out-door relief and medical relief by the Poor-law Guardians, has been done?—I do not say all has been done that might have been done had the circumstances of the district been other. But the rates in West Ham are very high, the neighbourhood is a poor one, and I believe

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

believe the Corporation has done as much as could have been expected from them under the circumstances.

988. What is your rate—it is 7*s.* 6*d.* in the £, is it not?—It is somewhere about 8*s.*

989. It does not share the advantages of the equalisation of rates of London?—No.

990. Have your Poor-law guardians in West Ham done what other Metropolitan guardians have done; that is to say, authorised relieving officers to visit the homes of the specially distressed who refuse to go into the workhouse?—I know that special orders have been given to them to meet cases of distress outside those in the workhouse.

991. Has the Town Council co-operated with the guardians in the relief of distress?—Yes, it has.

992. Is the stone-yard in full swing?—It is at present.

993. How many men are employed?—I had a report on Friday, and the number employed then was 320 or 340.

994. In your knowledge, what steps has West Ham taken, either through the Poor-law guardians or the Town Council, to co-operate with private and public charities, and friendly societies, and trades unions, in collectively dealing with the distress in West Ham, and preventing overlapping and waste?—There has been a representative committee on which the guardians and the Corporation, as well as trades unions, friendly societies and charities, and so on, have all been represented, for the purpose of trying to cope with the distress existing.

995. Was not a certain sum of money offered by Mr. Hills to the Town Council?—Yes.

996. What was the amount of money?—1,000*l.*

997. Was it accepted?—It was accepted.

998. It was finally accepted, was it?—No, first of all it was accepted. At the meeting of the Corporation, where the offer was made, the sum was accepted. At a subsequent meeting the week following the motion accepting the money was rescinded.

Mr. *Bolton.*

999. Why?—The men refused to accept the conditions under which the money was to be spent. The donor of the money, Mr. A. F. Hills, specified that not more than 4*d.* per hour was to be paid by the committee. The work to be done was of a kind that unskilled labour could perform, and the men, that is to say the unemployed, and the Trades Council objected on the ground that as the rate of wages for unskilled labour was 6*d.* an hour it would be setting a bad example to private employers to undertake work at less than the trades union rate of wages.

Mr. *John Burns.*

1000. What was the final result?—The Corporation rejected the offer of Mr. Hills. They rescinded the motion in which they had accepted it, and rejected the offer of Mr. Hills.

1001. Do you know what is being done with the money?—Mr. Hills is employing it privately.

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

1002. The money is being spent?—The money is being spent under the control of a committee.

1003. Generally, is the work being carried out as well as if the Town Council had done it?—I presume it is. I have no special information.

Mr. *Bolton.*

1004. Is the rate of payment left at 4*d.*?—Yes.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

1005. Is that Mr. Hills, of Thames-street?—Yes.

Chairman.] I may say I think it will be desirable for the Committee to see Mr. Hills, who has a very good knowledge of this subject.

Mr. *John Burns.*

1006. If money were forthcoming in West Ham, do you think there is sufficient making up of old roads, the laying out of new, filling up ditches, and general sanitary work, to keep the physically able-bodied men in work for at least a couple of months?—I would admit that such was the case.

1007. That being so, why should Bermondsey, Battersea, and Birmingham contribute in the shape of an Imperial contribution towards the sanitary improvement of West Ham and its property?—I have not proposed that such should be the case. If the Birmingham local authority, or the others that you have named, require to undertake similar work, part of the grant might be, and would be, allocated to them on the same basis.

1008. But do you not think that that system of bringing in external authorities to contribute to work that a particular locality only got the advantage of would lead to maladministration?—No, I do not. If I were proposing this as a permanent method of dealing with the unemployed, I would say at once, yes; but I again repeat, it is a purely temporary expedient to tide us over the few weeks which now remain between us and the Spring.

1009. In answer to a question put to you by Mr. David Randell, on Friday last, you said you wanted this 100,000*l.* to be disbursed in small instalments, in the way of loan to local authorities; or, to use your own words, they are "to advance a loan to that extent"?—I did not say they were to advance it as a loan.

1010. I am reading your answer to Question 745?—I have not read my evidence, but if the report says this 100,000*l.* was to be advanced as a loan it is incorrect.

1011. I understood, in answer to Mr. Crean, you wished it to be a free grant?—I did not say that it was to be advanced as a loan. There must be some confusion in the report. The question put to me was: was not it the fact that 80,000*l.* had been given to Ireland to relieve distress there, and my reply was "Yes, by way of loan."

1012. But do you not think the Local Government Board, when expressing its willingness to facilitate all exceptional work for the relief of distress,

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

distress, will rapidly give sanction to a loan on the rates; do you not think that would meet the case?—No; because before such sanction could be obtained the usual formalities have to be gone through. The work has to be marked out, application made, and the Inspector's Report to be received; and by the time that was done March probably would be here.

1013. Are you not aware that in anticipation of a loan many districts in London have spent 2,000*l.* or 3,000*l.* already?—Probably that may be so; I do not dispute it.

1014. If they could do that, why could not West Ham do it?—For the reason I have stated, that it is already overburdened.

1015. Would you apply one method of assisting West Ham, under fairly normal conditions, and in so doing depart from the system of help that was applied to Lancashire during exceptionally severe conditions and times?—I do not quite know what conditions you are referring to.

1016. I mean the nearly absolute loss of the cotton trade through the American war?—What I was asking was as to the means taken to relieve the distress.

1017. My question is this: Would you ask for West Ham, under less critical conditions, that which Parliament refused to give Lancashire under more critical conditions?—I do not admit that the conditions are less critical. It was a case of starvation then, and it is a case of starvation to-day. It is not merely the case of West Ham, but it is the case of a good many of the centres of industry all over the country.

1018. I am putting this to you: When a textile population was suddenly deprived of its work (for it was not only the cotton trade, but the cognate industries connected with it), representing a population of nearly 400,000 bread winners, suddenly thrown out of work, Parliament refused to give an Imperial grant, and under those circumstances the local authorities accepted Parliament's decision, and out of their own rates, and loans raised on those rates, got over their own difficulty?—That is 30 years ago. I would hope that since then we have learnt that, that the State, as a whole, is bound to contribute towards the support of distressed localities in the State.

1019. We have learnt much since then, and one thing that has been learnt is the experience of the Local Government Board, which certainly, almost without minute investigation, gives to distressed local authorities to-day what Lancashire had to clamour for for 15 months, namely, loans on easy terms?—We have heard it stated here that that is not always immediate; and I know there is considerable difficulty, in many instances, in getting applications made promptly (and necessarily, so I would say) to the Local Government Board.

1020. Do you still adhere to your opinion that if this Imperial subsidy came to West Ham there would not be an influx into West Ham?—There would, if it were confined to West Ham.

1021. Would it not be so if it were confined to the 20 distressed districts for which the exceptional distress renders an Interim Report necessary?—Not to any appreciable extent.

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

1022. Do you think that the residential test would operate in any way in keeping them away?—I think I said in the course of my original statement that there should be a residence of nine or 12 months.

1023. From your experience do you not find, where residential qualification is imposed, it does not get rid of vagrants and casuals coming in and getting relief for two or three nights?—I am aware that it does not get rid of it, but it tends to minimise it very greatly.

1024. Is it your experience that relief committees formed in every ward by amateurs, especially by candidates for all public offices, have a tendency in their operation to break down the moral fibre of the men, women and children to whom the food is given?—I never served on a relief committee, so that I cannot say.

1025. And you have never been a member of a board of guardians?—No.

1026. Have you ever attended a meeting of the guardians?—I have.

1027. Have you ever visited the stone-yard?—Yes.

1028. Have you ever visited a labour colony?—No.

1029. Did you visit the labour colony at Abbey Mills?—No.

1030. Where, in your opinion, does relief for the unemployed terminate and the Poor-law begin?—In cases where the person destitute is destitute through his own fault—that is to say, the unemployed person is a person out of employment through no fault of his own; a person who is out of employment through his own fault, supposing it to be a vicious fault, is a fit subject for either Poor-law relief or penal treatment—I do not mind which.

1031. I must ask you this question in order to put the next one. What do you think is the exceptional local reason for the large number of unemployed that you say exist in West Ham?—The exceptional local reason is the distress of agriculture down through Essex, and the other bordering counties.

1032. Are there any decaying industries in West Ham?—No large industries, except the shipbuilding, which has been practically closed, at the Thames Iron Works.

1033. That is a decaying industry?—Yes.

1034. What do you think would be the effect of a temporary contribution, either large or small, in inducing men to stay in West Ham, or where there is a relatively decaying industry instead of going elsewhere for work?—I do not think it would have any effect on those desiring work. Men of the class you are referring to, displaced by the shipbuilding yard being shut down practically, if they knew of work, in spite of any grant that might come from the Treasury, would go to find work.

1035. Is it your experience that West Ham is being specially crowded by the unemployed, because you yourself and many others with whom you work have constituted yourselves specially the advocates of certain schemes for unemployed relief work?—No, I do not think there is any foundation whatever for a statement of that kind, if it were made.

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

1036. Would you combat it, if it were made?—I would.

1037. Would you deny it, after investigation had been made?—It would depend upon what the result of the investigation was.

1038. Is West Ham suffering, like other parts of London, from its close proximity to Medland Hall, to the Salvation Army shelters, and Church Home shelters, and the many amateur experiments that have been started in London for the temporary relief of the destitute?—I would rather say that West Ham is being relieved by those agencies, all of which are outside of West Ham.

1039. The canal bridge is the only thing that divides them from West Ham, is it not?—There is a good distance between the nearest of them and West Ham.

1040. I want to ask you whether you do not think that 10,000*l.* spent by West Ham out of its own local rates, quietly, and, if you like, secretly, through the agency of the Poor-law officers and experts in dealing with distress, of course without disfranchisement, would do more good than an Imperial contribution known all over the world of 30,000*l.*?—If it were possible to give it in that way that might be so; but we must deal with possibilities, not with what we desire to see. Personally, I would prefer at this moment a State grant, for this reason: that it would be a recognition of the fact that it is the duty of the State to deal with the unemployed, who are in that position through no fault of their own.

1041. Assuming that 5,000*l.* was given to West Ham to-morrow, how would you suggest the immediate spending of it?—In the way that the money is being spent at present through the agency of the committees which are at work; there is a central committee and sub-committees spread all over the borough.

1042. You would not let the guardians have it?—I would not let the guardians have it.

1043. Would you let a committee of the Town Council have it?—An ideal committee for this purpose, in my view, would be a committee composed of representatives from the guardians, from the Corporation, from the various trade unions, and friendly societies, and from the various churches.

1044. You would not let the guardians have it at all?—The reason being that the relief given through them would carry disfranchisement with it.

1045. Assuming that disfranchisement was not a condition of receiving relief, do you not think that the Poor-law guardians can detect imposture better than amateurs, however intelligent, or however sympathetic?—They may be able to detect imposture better, but in the cases that one would most desire to relieve the persons would be deterred from asking for relief by the fact of having to go to the guardians for it.

1046. Would not that difficulty be got over by the guardians forming part only of a committee composed of representatives of trades unions, as you have described, and the Charity Organization Society, and so on; would not that relieve much of the reproach that might attach to the guardians if they were acting by themselves?—I have said I would desire to include the guardians; but let me say I did not include the Charity Organization Society in my list.

1047. If subsidies are given to a shipbuilding or riverside district where trade is bad or very fluctuating from lack of work in the districts, do you think that will encourage either masters or men to reorganise their methods of working, which now involve six or seven or eight months' overtime and no work for four or five months?—If it was proposed to grant these subsidies permanently probably they would have an effect of the kind you indicate.

1048. Let me put it in this way: Supposing a district like West Ham works overtime in ship repairing or shipbuilding, or any other work, and then depends upon subsidies from the Imperial Authority in 1895, do you not think it would lead to a greater disorganisation of industry in 1896?—No, I do not.

1049. You noticed, perhaps, that in answer to Question 572, Sir Hugh Owen admitted that the guardians had absolute discretion in giving relief?—Yes.

1050. Supposing relief so given was not subject to political disqualification, what is your objection?—I did not say I had any objection.

1051. Would you have any objection to the guardians taking charge entirely of this subsidy if it was granted?—No, I would not, if the disqualification was removed.

1052. If the disqualification disappeared you would have no objection to the guardians distributing the whole of this sum?—No.

1053. You have read, have you not, the answers of Sir Hugh Owen, to the effect that the Board does not interfere with the discretion of the guardians?—Yes.

1054. That guardians can co-operate with vestries and local authorities; that they can give relief in kind; they can give it in work; and can give it in the stone-yard; and that they can acquire loans on speedy and easy terms, and you have read the circular; do you not think that provided the local authority have the initiative those powers are sufficient to meet the distress that now exists?—You will probably hear the other side to Sir Hugh Owen's statement when you have the official evidence from West Ham; there is always another side to a statement of that kind.

1055. Are you aware that in one district of London a local authority that looks after a working class constituency has in four years put aside 52,000*l.* for work to be carried out at depressed times, and under circumstances when men, if such work was not provided, would either be without relief, or have to go to the stone-yard or the workhouse?—I was not aware of it, but I should say it is a very wise thing to do.

1056. If one district can do that, and not be surcharged or hampered by the Local Government Board, why cannot West Ham, that has a fully-fledged Town Council, go and do likewise?—The reason is that they spend each year up to the full amount of what they can raise by taxation.

1057. Do you not think, if the amount they do raise by taxation was reorganised and reapportioned, and adapted to the fluctuating character of its riverside population, it would not be necessary

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

necessary to come to the Imperial authority at all?—No, I do not think that. The Corporation might for one year be able to employ the unemployed in West Ham, but they could not go on doing it year by year, and I would certainly be pleased (though I would be surprised) to learn that any one district in London, however much it may be doing to meet the difficulty, has altogether overcome it.

1058. When I speak of that money being put aside, what I mean is this: that it is now customary (and it is becoming increasingly so) for local authorities in London to put aside in the months of August, September, and October a certain sum of money that shall be disbursed by the local authority on unemployed work during the winter, such as painting urinals and lavatories, painting up the names of streets and painting water carts, the doing of all necessary repairs to old roads, and generally putting the whole of their local machinery in order for the Spring and Summer; are you aware that in that way one district has carried out over 52,000*l.* worth of work in four years?—I am pleased to hear it.

1059. That is done with or without a loan. If we were to give an Imperial contribution to a district that had not specially done that, do you not think it would be a discouragement to those districts that had been taking locally the initiative?—No, I do not. If it were a case of attending to the requirements of a district which had neglected its duty, then, of course, there would be force in what you say; but it is a case of relieving destitute men and women, no matter what the neglect may have been on the part of the authorities. I can understand this being a very valuable recommendation to local authorities for the future, but we cannot apply it, however good it may be, to this winter, and my suggestion mainly bore upon the distress now prevailing.

1060. I gather from you that beyond an extension of outdoor relief without disqualification you have no other remedy for the immediate distress. Only the one I have suggested.

1061. I mean other than the contribution of 4,000*l.* or 5,000*l.* to distressed districts to be spent in a way similar to that upon which outdoor relief would be spent without disqualification?—Quite so.

1062. You regard that with equanimity, do you?—Perfectly.

1063. You do not anticipate moral disadvantages from that being done?—I have more faith in the class I belong to than to anticipate such a result.

1064. You do not anticipate local maladministration as a consequence of that being done?—I do not.

1065. You do not think it would lead to taking from local authorities their own responsibility and initiative in coping with their own distress?—No, I do not.

Mr. *Bousfield.*

1066. You look upon this proposition of yours as merely, I think, a temporary expedient to meet very exceptional circumstances?—That only; that is so.

Mr. *Bousfield*—continued.

1067. But you would agree, I suppose, that it is desirable to do it as far as possible—if is it done—on lines which would give us useful experience for future guidance?—If it can be done; yes.

1068. If it can be done?—Yes.

1069. From the questions that have been put to you with regard to the numbers, and how far this hundred thousand pounds would go, it is obvious, is it not, that only a small proportion of the exceptional distress could be relieved by anything that we could do?—Not by "anything that we could do"; but by the sum I named, "only a small proportion of the exceptional distress could be relieved."

1070. We should have to have a very severe sifting out, should we not, in order to apply such money as might be applied in the quarters where it was most wanted?—The localities, you mean?

1071. Yes.—The localities where it was most wanted, yes.

1072. And you suggested a committee of the Treasury, I think, for that purpose?—To allocate the amounts to be given.

1073. I want to suggest this to you. Having regard to the smallness of the amount which is probable Parliament would give in proportion to the amount of distress, do not you think it would be better to make it a condition that an amount should be subscribed locally by voluntary contributions, an equal amount supplied by the local authority out of the rate, and then an equal amount (it might be) supplied by Parliament to add to those two, so that there would be three equal contributions?—It would be an improvement.

1074. That would have the effect, would it not, of making each 100,000*l.* a part of 300,000*l.* to be applied to this purpose?—Just so.

1075. Then that would want sifting, would it not, to meet the most necessitous cases?—Yes.

1076. I mean to say this: supposing, for instance, that assistance was required in a particular district, and the inhabitants of that district had to raise a thousand pounds by voluntary contributions to meet an equivalent sum, they would not be likely to do that unless there was very severe distress existing, would they?—No, they would not; and in like manner the Corporation would not be likely to vote a similar amount.

1077. Then the next security would be that the Corporation or local authority would not be likely to add a thousand pounds to that unless there was very great necessity for it?—That is so.

1078. Then if we had, as a first step, the fact that the inhabitants deemed it requisite to subscribe a certain amount, say a thousand pounds, and the local authority deemed it desirable to add a thousand pounds, then do not you think we might safely say that a thousand pounds might be added from funds provided by Parliament without going through the necessity of enquiring into the particular circumstances?—If these conditions were complied with that might be taken as *primâ facie* evidence that distress existed.

1079. You think it desirable also to have some further sifting do you?—It might be desirable.

Mr. *Bousfield*—continued.

1080. It would be, would it not, a necessary condition in any locality where there were no official statistics that a register should at once be opened on which every unemployed person who desired relief should register his name?—Yes.

1081. That you agree would be an essential?—Yes.

1082. Then it would be an essential, would it not, that where ever money was spent we should have accurate accounts and returns from the local authorities telling us exactly what they had done, so that the experience might be available for future purposes?—That would be desirable.

1083. I think you said you did not see any objection to imposing a limit of—roughly—say 12 months' residence in order to secure that, as far as possible, no person would be drawn from districts outside the particular district?—I would put a limit.

1084. You think a large part of any amount that has to be spent for this emergency would have simply to be given in relief without work?—I think that is probable, yes.

1085. Now I want to suggest that a part of it might be given in loans, which should be repayable by the persons assisted—loans without security, I mean, except their own undertaking to pay them. Would not that meet many cases in which the man is a respectable workman, with household things that he could pawn if he liked—a man who might be expected to repay the amount afterwards, and who was only in temporary distress, but distress which made him destitute, except for his furniture, his tools, and so on?—I am sure that a provision of that kind would be very much prized by a class of the community who perhaps suffer most—the retiring, self-respecting class.

1086. But you would agree that loans of that sort to the better class of working men would be a very acceptable form of relief?—It would be.

1087. Now as regards work—you had this thousand pounds offered at West Ham?—Yes.

1088. On condition that it should be employed in wages at not more than fourpence an hour, I think. I think your influence was used, was it not, in the matter?—No, I may say perhaps, as there seems to be some misapprehension, that I had no connection of any kind whatever with the agitation which resulted in the Town Council rescinding its resolution; but it is fair to say that I entirely approved of the steps which were taken when they came to my knowledge.

1089. Practically, it was the trades union leaders, I suppose, who did it?—Yes, that is so.

1090. Sixpence is the rate per hour for skilled labour in that part of London, is it not?—Yes.

1091. Fourpence would be about two-thirds?—Yes.

1092. If we are to use relief works as a means of helping to solve this unemployed question, do not you think it is essential that rate of wages paid should be less than the ordinary rate of wages in the district?—No, I do not; it depends altogether, at least it depends largely, on what form the relief works are to take. Supposing the relief works to take the form of necessary

Mr. *Bousfield*—continued.

and useful work, and the persons engaged to be qualified to perform a day's work, why should the wages paid be less than they would otherwise be?

1093. No doubt. You put a case where obviously the work requires to be done and where the local authority would do it in any case, and would employ skilled labour in any case at the normal rate of wages—that I am leaving out of the question—I was rather putting the case of relief works, such as ground works, laying out open spaces, and doing other work which might not be done but for the necessities of the case, and where you are employing all sorts and condition of men who apply for work; in those cases, if such a thing is to succeed, is it not essential that the rate should be (say) about two-thirds of the ordinary rate of wages?—No; I would personally approve of what is known as the co-operative relief works which exists in New Zealand, and which I think are a part of this.

Mr. *Jackson.*

1094. New Zealand?—Yes.

1095. Are there relief works in New Zealand?—Yes.

Mr. *Bousfield.*

1096. Will you tell us what you mean by that?—I was about to say that they are referred to, I think, this month in the "Labour Gazette." The estimated cost of the work is ascertained by the engineers, and the work is then let to a gang of men who arrange their own terms. The labour cost is what it would be if undertaken under normal conditions. If the persons employed are not competent they themselves, of course, are the sufferers; if they are fully competent, then they earn full wages day by day. Personally, I think that would be a much fairer method than arbitrarily to fix a less sum per hour than what is admitted to be a fair rate of wages.

1097. But you know that those men who are out of work are of all degrees of competency, from absolute incompetency to an ordinary skilled workman, are not they?—Yes.

1098. And in a band of that sort the competent men would not endure, would they, that absolutely incompetent men should be working with them and sharing in that which they did not have to earn?—There would be a tendency for the men to group themselves; but there is an amount of good feeling and good fellowship amongst that section of society which finds expression in the strong helping the weak.

1099. But I am speaking rather of this: It would be a question, would it not, not so much of the strong helping the weak as of the industrious helping the idle?—No, I do not think so; but suppose the system to be adopted, then the persons to whom the contract was let would be the whole of the men engaged, and, naturally, men of a type and a given degree of ability would come together and leave the less capable to group themselves by themselves.

1100. But would not that practically have the result of throwing the less capable out altogether?—Not necessarily. If the works were not sufficient to include the whole of the out-of-works

Mr. *Bousfield*—continued.

out-of-works that would be the result. I merely suggest that as a method of meeting the objection.

1101. Where, of course, the work is of a character that it could be let out by the piece or by contract in that way; it would only apply to such cases, would it not?—Yes, it would.

1102. Now I take the other class of cases: I want to put a case to you that came under my own experience—I think it was in the year of the Mansion House Fund: I organised relief works on a small scale; we had about 100 men who were out of work; of those there were a considerable number of loafers who would come into the field and handle a shovel, but would see that they did as little work with it as they could; there were a number of men broken down—clerks and others—who, with all the will in the world, would take a shovel and try to handle it, but could not do very much work with it; and there were a few men experienced in ground work—navvies and others—one of whom would do as much work as six or eight of the others combined together. Practically, with your relief works, you would have both those working side by side, would not you?—Yes, with relief works.

1103. And I think you would agree that the average value of their work would not—taking the ordinary work at 6*d.* an hour—be more than 4*d.* an hour?—Probably not at the beginning; but any man of average physical strength, with very, very few weeks of practice, is able to perform an ordinary labourer's day's work. In regard to the loafers, allow me to say that the ordinary rules which regulate industry ought to be applied to relief works, and if a man is a loafer—able to work and not willing to work—then by all means get rid of him; the relief works are no place for him.

1104. Suppose you eliminate that class, then you have the class, as I have put it, of light porters, of broken down clerks, of all sorts of people who have never been used to do ground work, whose work is very little worth in those circumstances?—I was referring to those in the first part of my answer—that by a few weeks' training these men become able to handle the tools necessary for rough kind of work, and able to perform a fairly honest day's work.

1105. But in the case that I am referring to, the year of the Mansion House Fund—I think the period of emergency lasted some four or five weeks—in that time I put to you what our result was. We found that at 4*d.* an hour the ground work that we did had cost rather more than it would have cost if we had been employing men of ordinary skill at the rate of 6*d.* an hour. Would not you expect that that would be the result?—At the beginning I would.

1106. The whole time only lasts perhaps four, five, or six weeks; would not you expect that the average cost of the work undertaken under those circumstances, even at the rate of 4*d.* an hour, would come out at more than if you had employed skilled labour at the regular rate of wages?—Yes; I should not be surprised if it were so.

1107. Would not you think under those circumstances, and looking at the fact that you have such a mixed class to relieve, that it is essential in putting the thing on a practical basis that you should really not pay for the work more than it is worth at ordinary rates?—The circumstances of the special case which has raised this question in West Ham were different from those which you are assuming to exist. The class that was being relieved were ordinary labourers, who were to be engaged in an ordinary labourers' work, and the contention was that they ought to receive the ordinary labourers' pay. Whether the rule to be applied here applies all round is another question.

1108. Then, of the unemployed who were to share in this 1,000*l.*, and the added 1,000*l.* of the local authority, did you propose to pick out those who were competent labourers, and leave the less competent to take care of themselves?—No; the greater proportion of those who were applying for relief were labourers of this kind.

1109. Still, if you did give relief on the assumption that you were going to employ competent people at the regular rate of wages, you would leave untouched a large class who might be the neediest?—If an artisan took the labourer's work, his muscles are as well developed, his bodily strength is as great, and he is able to perform as much work as the ordinary labourer would be.

1110. But, practically, you know that artisans never do come upon relief works, do not you—the ordinary tradesman?—Oh, no, I do not know anything of the kind. I know that that, perhaps, more than any other class of the community is the class to-day that stands most in need of relief—the artisan class.

1111. As a matter of fact, an ordinary artisan or tradesman belonging to a trades union, earning rates of wages of perhaps 8*d.*, 9*d.* or 10*d.* an hour, is debarred by the rules of the union from taking work at 6*d.* an hour, is he not?—At his own trade.

1112. At any other trade, too, is it not a fact (it is a matter within my own experience) that under such circumstances artisans decline to work for 6*d.* an hour even?—I should say very probably, unless they are absolutely compelled to accept relief.

1113. May I not say that, under those circumstances, they would lose their rights in the Union, and, therefore, are not able to accept work at such rates?—If it be at their own trade, that is so; but I do not know of any case within my own knowledge where it would apply to the artisan except labourer's work; it might be contrary to the rules of the Labourers' Union, which is a different matter.

1114. Practically, any relief we could give to artisans—and that class—would be better given, would it not, as I suggested just now, by way of loans to be repaid?—Yes, I think it would. Then in that case does it not resolve itself into this—that the class to be relieved is the labouring class, who are accustomed to labouring work and ought to be paid labourers' wages?

1115. Do you mind repeating that please?—Yes. Assuming that the artisan class would not come upon the relief works, then those remaining to come upon the relief works would be labourers.

1116. Labourers and people who were not tradesmen at all?—Yes.

Mr. *Bousfield*—continued.

1117. Broken-down people of all kinds?—Yes.

1118. Are not those—the broken-down people—together with the idle and the vicious—the chief difficulty in dealing with this question of the unemployed?—No, I do not think they are. If we had anything like a system for dealing with the unemployed they would require to be dealt with differently from the other classes; I do not think they constitute the chief difficulty of dealing with the case.

1119. You would admit, I think, with regard to that class, that if you offered them work at fourpence an hour it would generally be more than they were worth, would it not?—In many cases it would.

1120. Do not you think that, in order to deal with this problem, it is necessary to have work to offer to that class at a low rate of wages in order to see whether they are willing to work at all?—No; I think if you have a class like that it would be good statesmanship to induce them to work, and if you brand them at the outset with the mark of inferiority you deprive them of the stimulus of pride and put obstacles in the way of their own reclamation.

1121. I suppose you would not suggest that we should put men in different classes according to their capacity for work, and pay the one 2*d.* an hour, another 3*d.*, another 4*d.*, 5*d.*, 6*d.*, 7*d.*, and so on; you would not suggest that, would you?—It might be necessary.

1122. Do you think that is a practicable way of doing it?—I do; fix a minimum, as is the case under private employers, and where a man is more than usually competent, then pay him accordingly.

1123. I thought, with reference to trades unionism, that it rather went in for equalising these matters by a uniform wage all round?—No; the trades union fixes a minimum; as much above that as you please, nothing below it.

Mr. *John Burns.*

1124. It is something like the lawyer's "six and eightpence," is it not?—Quite so.

Mr. *Bousfield.*

1125. At all events, so long as you have to deal with a large class of men that come indiscriminately; before you have sifted and sorted them you ought to have work that you can offer them—if you are to distinguish between them—at the same rate of wages?—Yes. Will you allow me to supplement that?

1126. May I just put this first: Do not you think, gauging the wages by the value of their work, that the average rate of the whole class together, of the unemployed (good and bad, mark you) is not worth more than two-thirds of the normal rate of wages for skilled labour of the same class?—I do not know any case where skilled labour is applied as a test of relief. If you put it on the ground of skilled labour I would at once say "yes." If you mean ordinary labouring work, using the term in the sense in which it is generally employed, then I would say "no"; the one class of men being superior labourers would counterbalance the number that would be inferior in capacity.

Mr. *Bousfield*—continued.

1127. You assume that they are superior labourers. I am talking of the men who do ground work, worth say 6*d.* an hour, the skilled class, the men who do the work efficiently, the rate of wages for them is 6*d.* an hour?—In some cases it is higher; that is the minimum. There are handy labourers who are getting 7½*d.* and 8*d.* an hour.

1128. If you take 99 out of 100 they are getting 6*d.* an hour, is not that so?—I suppose so; a large number.

1129. If you take the average, skilled and unskilled, who would be likely to come upon these funds, the average remuneration, looking at the worth of their work, would not be more than 4*d.*, would it, about two-thirds?—No; I repeat that if you are referring to general labourers' work I should not admit the proposition beyond the first week or two. During the first week or two it might be so, but not after that.

1130. I think you agree that it would be important in cases of relief to give the relief in kind instead of in money?—Where the relief was being given through a committee I would very largely adopt the regulation of the guardians and give it chiefly in kind for a good many reasons.

1131. Have you seen the plan tried of issuing books by a committee, with the stamp of the committee upon it, to give credit (on certain shopkeepers) to the amount of half-a-crown or 5*s.*?—We have that plan adopted very largely in Scotland, where it is worked by the police, and it works admirably.

1132. It secures, does it not, that the money shall not be spent in drink?—Not in every case; sometimes the groceries are sold; but very largely it has that effect.

1133. You are in favour of this money being distributed under some such system as that?—Yes, partly.

Mr. *Renshaw.*

1134. I think you told us that in West Ham there was an inability to supply work for the unemployed?—For the entire number, yes.

1135. Are you aware of any other part of the country where a similar inability exists?—I would say that that applies to the whole of the industrial areas of London, and practically also to each of the large centres of population where the unemployed question is acute.

1136. Then you do not apply that statement to any of the agricultural parts of the country?—The new machinery of Local Government may be effectively applied—that, together with the application of the Allotments Act, would very largely meet the difficulties in the agricultural districts.

1137. Is it not known that it is being met in that way in the agricultural districts?—No.

1138. Is any effort being made generally to meet it in that way?—The time that has elapsed since the Act came into force has been so short that we can scarcely expect any effective dealing with the question thus far. I anticipate that in many places the effort will be made—in fact, I know that efforts are being made now.

1139. Then,

Mr. *Renshaw*—continued.

1139. Then, is it your opinion that with regard to the particular case of West Ham, the effect of efforts in that direction in Essex would be to withdraw a considerable portion of this population which is the subject of the difficulty in West Ham at present?—Yes, I believe it would. I have attended meetings and conferences, and so on, to hear suggestions from the men themselves as to what they would prefer being done, and in every case the favourite remedy is going back to the land.

1140. How would these men that are destitute and out of work at present be able to get even the necessary amount of money to stock the land or to work the land?—I would expect that when this Committee comes to make its final Report that is one of the questions which will be dealt with. The men themselves are unable of their own resources either to get the land or to stock the land; but I believe that help given, either by the central or the local authority, would be invaluable in enabling the men to settle upon the land—men who would desire to do so.

1141. Would it not be the case that the local demand on a fund of money, part of which came from the State, would rather tend in the case of large and populous areas like West Ham—where you had a very considerable number of unemployed—to induce the application to the State for the expenditure of money there, whilst in the smaller agricultural districts, on account of the difficulties arising on a smaller scale, it would not be probable that the local authorities would make any application; and that that would therefore rather tend, by carrying out the scheme which you have submitted to the Committee, to encourage the population to move into these larger areas and to take them away from the rural area districts?—It would require to be generally made known that the residential test—whatever it might be—was being rigidly enforced; and that would prevent men coming into places like West Ham, where relief was being given.

1142. In regard to the case of Scotland, in giving us a list of places from which you got reports as to the distress which existed, I think you mentioned Glasgow as the only place from which you had reports in Scotland?—And this morning I gave Dundee.

1143. In Dundee is the state of matters as unfavourable as you reported it to be in Glasgow?—In proportion to the population it is almost as large.

1144. But in the case of both Glasgow and Dundee efforts have been made locally, which have been, in your opinion, amply sufficient to cope with the actual distress?—Arising from the frost, yes; I do not say "amply sufficient."

1145. Have been sufficient?—Yes. I would not qualify it as "amply sufficient."

1146. You are not aware of any part of Scotland, then, which would be likely to make any application for money out of this sum of 100,000*l.*, which you propose shall come from the State?—Yes; I would expect both Glasgow and Edinburgh, also Dundee and Aberdeen, to make application.

Mr. *Renshaw*—continued.

1147. You state that as your opinion, believing that the number of the unemployed in those cities which you have named are so numerous as to necessitate such an appeal?—Yes. I do not say that in Aberdeen and Edinburgh the cases could not be met by local effort and local charity; but if there is to be a grant from the State then, knowing the circumstances of the case in those places, I am certain that there would be an application for a share in the grant.

1148. What I wanted to ask you about that point was whether the effect of its being known that a fund of this sort was by the State placed at the disposal of the responsible public authorities, whereas in the case of Scotland you have not been able to point to any instance where it would really be needed—would that be to induce the local authorities, in order to take a share of it, to put forward a claim for urgency in regard to that particular case?—No; I have more faith in the public life of Scotland than to anticipate anything of that kind.

1149. After all, you are perfectly well aware of what the case in Scotland is at the present moment—that is to say, that we make a very large contribution from the Imperial Exchequer, and that we do not get as much back in Scotland as we ought to; would not this be an additional grievance in respect to Scotland?—No; it would make them all the more urgent, probably, to receive back their due share of it; but I do not think that there would be any danger of any public authority in the country making an application where the necessity for the application did not exist.

1150. You see we have to take your statement in this matter with what I understand is what is held in regard to the general principle, and that is that it is the duty of the State to supply work to individuals in the State?—That is so.

1151. That being so, if there is a sufficiency of work in one part of the State and an insufficiency in another, and it is to be the duty of the State to make good that insufficiency in one part at the expense of the whole State, it is obvious, is it not, that in the long run, on the principles you have laid down, it might add very largely to the general charge upon the public funds?—If it were a case of voting money periodically to meet distress, that would be so; but I anticipate that this Committee (the House of Commons it may be) will find a wiser and a more economical solution than that of making periodic grants from the Treasury to meet the case you have put—recurring distress from want of employment.

Mr. *Bolton.*

1152. You said that you regarded this proposal of yours as a precedent, if necessary?—Yes.

1153. How do you reconcile that with the statement that you have just made in answer to the last question of the honourable Member on my left?—I think the two statements are the same. What I said on a previous occasion was that if the State did not find employment for those out of work through no fault of their own, then this undesirable thing would require to be repeated—the making of a grant.

Mr. *Bolton*—continued.

1154. How is this to be a precedent if it is an exceptional measure of relief?—In this way: that, given the same set of circumstances again, the same thing would require to be done.

1155. I suppose that 6*d.* an hour is the trade union rate of wage, is it not, for the unskilled workmen?—In London it is.

1156. What your proposal amounts to is this: unlimited relief works at trade union rate of wages?—No; my proposal is a grant to meet the temporary distress now prevailing. When we come to the discussion of what is called the permanent solution of the unemployed problem, I will be prepared to state, if necessary, what my opinions are on the point raised by the honourable Member.

1157. But you said that you would advise a sum to be granted now; you suggested a hundred thousand pounds; but that was to be supplemented by another hundred thousand, and another hundred thousand, and so on to the extent of what might be required?—Yes.

1158. Does not that amount to the establishment of unlimited relief works at trade union rate of wages?—If the money was being applied to relief works that construction might be put upon it. I distinctly stated (and repeat the statement) that it is only meant to cover the period until this Committee has made its Report.

1159. You spoke of the new machinery for the purpose of promoting allotments, which you say you rely upon to alleviate the distress. What do you refer to as the "new machinery"?—What I had in my mind was the establishment of Parish Councils by the Parish Councils Act.

1160. How will the establishment of the Parish Councils in any way affect West Ham and places like West Ham?—The question was not put concerning West Ham; it was put concerning the agricultural districts. In this way, however, I may say, to save your putting another question, the population of West Ham, especially the unemployed population, is largely augmented by people coming in from the agricultural districts; if provision were made for those people in the rural districts they would not flock into London and to West Ham.

1161. Is there such an influx of agricultural population into West Ham as you are suggesting; is there really such an influx?—There is an influx of the agricultural population into West Ham. The most active men in the labour movement in West Ham, I mean especially amongst the general labourers, are men who were brought up in agricultural districts, and who have come in because they were unable to find employment in the agricultural districts.

1162. But was not the reason rather that they got better wages in West Ham than for working on the land in the agricultural districts?—No, that is not the reason given; the reason was that they could not earn wages at all in the agricultural districts.

1163. But if a man is to get 6*d.* an hour for a working day of eight hours (4*s.* a day) who has been in the habit of working on farms in agricultural labour, is not the increase of wage so great as to attract him to a place like West Ham?—It may be at a distance; but experience disillusions such men very, very quickly.

Mr. *Bolton*—continued.

1164. If he is earning 13*s.* to 15*s.* a week in another part of Essex, does not the attraction of 24*s.* a week in West Ham bring him to West Ham, apart from any want of employment at 13*s.* or 15*s.* a week elsewhere?—The 13*s.* or 15*s.* a week in the rural parts of Essex is a higher rate of wages—measuring wages by the purchasing power and the amount of comfort they bring—than 24*s.* a week in West Ham; and the agricultural labourers who are there know it.

1165. You think that the allotments under the new Parish Council will tend to relieve distress and reduce the number of the unemployed?—If the Acts are applied I believe that will be so.

1166. Bnt the people of West Ham cannot avail themselves of those Acts for more permanent distress, much less to meet the exigency of the present time, can they?—No; I was referring to the influx.

1167. Therefore the suggestion that you made about the new machinery of allotments does not apply to the present pressure of distress, does it?—No.

1168. It does not?—No.

1169. With regard to your experience, what experience have you had which enables you to lay down these propositions which you have laid down to this Committee?—Which propositions do you mean?

1170. Have you ever sat on any Boards dealing with questions of this kind?—I have never sat as a member of any Board dealing with questions of this kind.

1171. Or on any relief committee, or institutions of that kind?—I have never acted as a member of any of them; I have always refused, on principle, to do so.

1172. On principle?—Yes.

1173. Why on principle?—Because there were plenty to do that work, and there was other work requiring to be done which there were not so many to do.

1174. And do you think those few statistics you have given to the Committee enable you to speak with authority as to the extent of the distress throughout the country?—No, I spend most of my time in going about the country making special inquiries from place to place—making a speciality of the question—and these few figures are part of the results of a schedule which I sent out asking to be filled up and returned to me. I speak from personal knowledge coming into contact with the people all over the country, especially with those who are interested, in trying to solve this question.

1175. But "all over the country" is, of course, a very general term, and you have only mentioned specifically Leeds, Liverpool, Glasgow, West Ham, Edmonton, Darlington, Newcastle, and Sheffield. Those are the only towns or places that you have mentioned. If you go all over the country how is it that you cannot give more precise information about other places—some statistics and some reliable facts that could be evidenced and checked?—The honourable Member has just supplied the reply which I would have given: Why do not I give facts which could be tested, and so on. I want a Report of this Committee—an interim Report—immediately. I have already given too many

places

Mr. *Bolton*—continued.

places to suit the purpose I had in view; the more places given the more time wasted before the interim Report is put in, and because I desire an immediate interim Report I have not entered into details from places all over the country.

1176. A Parliamentary Committee cannot report except upon some reliable facts put before them; a vague impression in the mind of an individual Member who goes into the witness-box and tells what his impression is from going about the country is not sufficient to justify a Report on a difficult matter of this kind, is it?—I never expected that it was. I anticipated that one or two cases would be mentioned, and that local witnesses would be brought from those places (I think I said so) either to verify or to dispute the accuracy of the statements; and I considered that on these the Committee should make its interim Report.

1177. That we should deal with one or two cases, and have local witnesses as to one or two cases, and upon that make a Report which should apply to the whole country?—Where similar circumstances prevail, yes.

1178. Well, how are we to know where similar circumstances prevail unless we make inquiries and take evidence and get information that can be checked?—One of the questions put from this side of the table supplies a means by which a guarantee would be assured that no application would be made where distress did not exist—that is to say, that the application should come through the local authorities, and be backed up by their contribution of an equal sum to that proposed to be asked from Parliament.

1179. Then you propose, without special reference to existing distress, that we are to lay down the proposition that wherever distress of an unexpected character arises, Parliament is to make grants in aid to supplement moneys raised in particular localities?—I hope that no such statement will be put into my mouth; I object to it altogether.

1180. If we are not to act upon evidence before us in individual cases, we must act upon our own notion of what ought to be done under certain imagined cases?—No.

1181. And if we do that, do not we do what I was suggesting, and which you say I am putting into your mouth?—No.

1182. How is it possible for us hastily to rush through a Report without having evidence that we can check?—I have already stated how it is possible—by confining the evidence to one or two localities, and by saying that where the same set of conditions exists the same principle should be applied.

1183. One more question, and then I have done. How can we say that the same set of circumstances exists in other cases unless we get evidence to prove that?—The local officials could supply the evidence to the persons entrusted with disbursing the fund.

1184. Then we must take evidence, must not we?—I have answered that question.

Chairman.

1185. Is it not the case that besides local evidence which can be given by local witnesses (I must, by way of asking you a question, remind

Chairman—continued.

the honourable Member of this), we have put out a large number of enquiries, and that the answers to these will give a large amount, at any rate, of the information which is required?—I believe they will.

1186. I want to ask you one or two questions, first of all with regard to your general estimate of 1,750,000 unemployed, that is, of course, a rough estimate?—A very rough estimate.

1187. I do not wish to pin you to it at all, but let us know what it means; is it the whole United Kingdom, or England and Wales only?—The whole United Kingdom.

1188. The whole United Kingdom?—Yes.

1189. Including Scotland and Ireland?—Yes.

1190. Both sexes and all ages?—Yes; both sexes and all ages.

1191. All ages that are under circumstances to be employed?—Yes, that are employed.

1192. In the United Kingdom, I find that in 1891 the total number of employed persons under the two great heads of "agricultural" and "industrial," which really comprise nearly all these classes, were 12,500,000; and you think that at this moment, taking the country all round, one million and three quarters out of the twelve and a half millions are unemployed?—I do.

1193. That includes the frost-bound people, and those who are suffering from the severity of the weather?—No. When the winter is over the number will not be so great, but I was trying to exclude those who were affected by the frost.

1194. Then you think (again let me say that I do not wish to pin you to any very close figure at all, but putting those who are out of employment on account of the severity of the weather aside) there were, we will say at the beginning of the frost, a million and three-quarters out of employment out of the twelve and a half millions?—I believe that is so. May I put my answer in this way; That you might have taken out of the country a million and three quarters of its working population without in any way lessening the supply of labour for the work requiring to be performed—that is to say, without bringing the supply of labour under the demand.

1195. What precisely do you mean by "unemployed;" do you mean those who are continuously out of employment, or also those who are partly employed and partly unemployed? Do you include the seasons trade, in which at a particular time of the year there are always unemployed? Will you be kind enough to explain what it means exactly?—Certainly. In that estimate I do include the seasons trade.

1196. The workmen in which, we may take for granted, ought to look forward to being unemployed, and to make provision against it?—Yes, that is so; they ought to look forward to being unemployed; whether they can make provision against it or not is another question.

1197. They might do their best?—Then, with regard to the casually employed. If one-third of the number employed, as dock labourers, for instance, at any given period are out of work, or regularly, if the total number of men required is 1,000 say at any of the docks down the East

Chairman—continued.

End of London, and there are 1,500 applicants for the 1,000 jobs, there will be one-third—that is to say, 500—idle every day; they would not always be the same 500, but I would reckon those 500 of the 1,500 as being amongst the unemployed. I mean by the term "unemployed," the surplus labour there is which cannot find regular and constant work.

1198. Supposing you and I were both dockers, and you were employed one-half of the week and I the other, you would not count that two unemployed?—No, one unemployed.

1199. You would count that one unemployed?—Yes.

1200. Then the last question, to clear it up and make quite certain from what you have said is the case, these figures are not the destitute—they are the unemployed?—They are the unemployed,—yes.

1201. A good many of them may be in receipt of funds from unions and from other sources?—Yes, certainly.

1202. They necessarily would be?—Yes.

1203. A man in a union that is unemployed is assisted by the funds of his society, or may be?—Yes, for a certain period.

1204. Does it include those in workhouses?—No, I was excluding as far as I could the pauper element in workhouses.

1205. You have told us very definitely and accurately as to the state of things at West Ham, but the evidence you gave as to the large towns in the provinces and in Scotland was naturally not quite so definite. It is really upon the case of West Ham that you proceed, is it not, most definitely?—Well, my own personal predilection would have been to have taken West Ham as a typical case, perhaps with the situation there more acute than it is elsewhere; and, as I have already said, I named the other places because they had been referred to in Sir Hugh Owen's evidence.

1206. The strong argument which you use in favour of public aid being given to West Ham is that West Ham is at the end of its resources at the present moment, that it can raise no more rates—that its expenditure is as great as it can bear?—Yes.

1207. But that is not in the least the case with regard to Leeds, Liverpool, and Glasgow, and the other instances that you have quoted, of course; there are there not only large resources in the way of the benevolence of charitable individuals, but also the Corporations themselves are wealthy, and the rates are probably not excessive. In that respect West Ham is not in the least a guide to what would be a proper course with regard to those places?—Not from that point of view. There probably are resources in those other places which we have not the advantage of in West Ham; but I should not like it to go forth that I was in any way trying to make a special case for West Ham. I should be sorry if that impression was given.

1208. I do not wish to impute that to you at all.—No; I know you do not.

1209. What I mean is this. You, having West Ham so strongly in your mind and before your eyes, regard it as an instance upon which this Committee might go in its recommendation?—Yes.

Chairman—continued.

1210. And as a typical instance; whereas in that very important respect to which I have referred it is not probably a typical instance?—In this respect the cases are the same; that in West Ham a certain number of people are destitute through lack of employment. Whatever the reason is, the Corporation does not find them employment. In Leeds and Liverpool and elsewhere a certain number are also destitute, and whatever the reason the Corporations there do not find employment for the unemployed in those cities; and my contention was (my point all the way through has been) that the men who are destitute should not be allowed to remain so without aid being given; and we have no power to compel those Corporations to do this, that, or the next thing.

1211. Are you right there; are you sure of that. If it was the case that those Corporations are unable to relieve starvation, as the West Ham people according to you are, then that would be very good for your argument, but we have no reason to believe that the Liverpool people—whether Corporation or individuals in the community, or the Leeds people or the Glasgow people—are shutting their door against the relief of the distressed; on the contrary, we have rather reason to believe that they are doing everything that they find to be necessary, and that if it was proved that more was necessary, they would be only too glad to do it?—I would say, in reply to that, that what was necessary owing to the distress arising from the frost was done, and well done; but when the frost has passed away the ordinary residuum of the unemployed remains, and Glasgow (to take that as a case that I know some little about) has not made provision in the past for its unemployed, and I do not know that it is making provision in the present.

1212. Do not you think that there is a better chance of that now than in ordinary years, in this way: Supposing they are relieving the destitute in Glasgow, they cannot earmark this man as destitute on account of the frost, and that man as destitute on account of antecedent circumstances; they are both destitute, and as long as one of them continues destitute, the fund will probably go on administering relief to him?—The chances are, however, that the fund will not go on—that the fund will become exhausted—and the great necessity having passed away, it is questionable whether the people will continue to contribute to it.

1213. You mean the existence of the frost supplies a stimulus to private charity?—That is so.

1214. And that when the frost goes away the charity goes also, flows away, as the ice on the river does?—That is so.

1215. You not only admit, but you rejoice that this would be a new departure?—Yes.

1216. You are quite aware, as has been stated, that in the great classical case of the Lancashire cotton famine there was no application for public relief of this kind at all, and that any assistance that was given by the State was given by way of loan, which was repaid—principal and interest?—Yes.

1217. But you are glad that this should be made the point of a new departure, because you

Chairman—continued.

say that it is the duty of the State to furnish work?—Yes; to furnish work. I will put it like this, to be more correct, to furnish the opportunity to persons to earn their own living.

1218. One honourable Member thinks we had better have that made clear if we can. He wishes to know whether, in your opinion, it is the duty of the State to provide, directly or indirectly, for everybody that is out of work. That is your opinion, is it?—Yes.

1219. I do not wish, I need hardly say, to raise great questions of political and social theories, but you say that it is *the State.* "The State," after all, only means all the people of the three kingdoms; *the community* would not do for your purpose; *the local community* would not do; it must be *the State*?—"The State" comprises the whole of the people within the three kingdoms; but it is the embodiment of the principle of control—not of allowing individuals to do this or that as members of the community, but of the entire community doing a certain thing. In that sense I prefer that the State should be charged with the responsibility of doing this thing.

1220. It would not accord with your conception of the public duty of us all that we should substitute "the community" for "the State"—that is to say, the local authority instead of the central authority?—If you put the responsibility on the local authority for doing this thing; if you said to them, "It must be done," then that would practically concede the point that I contend for, save in this respect, that it is conceivable that grievous hardships might be inflicted on one locality which, from the point of view of us all being members of the one State, ought to be shared by other sections of the community.

1221. I do not wish to argue the general question; but there is a hardship also, is there not, upon a locality which may at this moment be pretty well off, but which at another time has been badly off, to be called upon practically to pay for the wants of a locality which is now badly off, but which may have had very flourishing times before; is it not difficult to equalise these conditions?—I do not think so.

1222. Then the difficulty, of course, would be, supposing the State did undertake this duty of administering a relief grant of the kind you have described, to select a district: You say that no place would apply where the necessity did not exist; but now I will take the City of Glasgow, which you and I know pretty well. I do not think it is at all likely that the City of Glasgow would apply, and yet the necessity (if it had not been met by their voluntary efforts and local efforts) exists there just as much, although not in the same degree, as in West Ham?—I would be inclined, with all respect, to differ from your opinion upon that point, and say that if the distress did exist and the House of Commons, by endorsing the recommendation of this Committee (supposing this to be recommended) had affirmed the principle that localities should undertake this matter, Glasgow would probably be foremost in endeavouring to do its duty by its destitute unemployed; that the very fact of the matter being recommended by this Committee and endorsed by the House of Commons would cause the Glasgow Town Council and other Corporations to look upon this question from a new point of view altogether.

Chairman—continued.

1223. I need not ask the question, because you must be fully aware of all that can be said with regard to the chilling effect that the grant of money from the central authority would have upon all local effort?—I would rather expect it would encourage local effort. If the person about to give felt that the State (the community) was doing its duty he would be more encouraged, I think, to be liberal. I may be wrong, but I anticipate a different result to that which is embodied in your question altogether.

1224. You made a proposal, which I heard with some degree of horror, that the Treasury Committee (if such a Committee was constituted) would be guided in the distribution amongst localities by this Parliamentary Committee; do you mean that we should undertake to suggest to the central authority which particular places most required this assistance?—I do not want to shirk the question, but you will admit it is a matter of detail. I would have either this Committee (this Committee by preference) or the Treasury Committee (supposing it to be appointed) to be satisfied that certain conditions did exist before making a grant.

1225. Certainly, somebody would have to be satisfied of those conditions?—That is so.

1226. I only guarded myself against letting it go past without protest that it should be this Parliamentary Committee. That would be executive work?—Yes.

1227. It would be essentially executive work, and you are aware that a Parliamentary Committee is not in any sense an executive Committee, but only an advisory Committee recommending to the House of Commons what principles should be adopted in certain cases. Do not you think yourself it would be rather beyond the functions of a Committee such as this?—Yes; I do not suppose it is contained in the reference.

1228. You laid great stress on the question of the disfranchisement of these unfortunate men who, through no fault of their own, are out of employment and have to be relieved. You think that that is not only an unjust thing in itself, but that it probably has a great effect in preventing them from seeking the relief they might otherwise obtain? –From the relief works—yes, I do.

Mr. *Jackson.*

1229. But that only applies, of course, to the guardians?—To the guardians—that is so.

1230. Not to the relief which is given by these other organisations?—No.

Mr. *Round.*

1231. I do not understand you to say that there is any sudden influx of agricultural labourers into West Ham, but that there has been a great influx of labourers from Essex during the last 10 or 15 years—a gradual migration from the agricultural parishes to West Ham and other industrial centres, but not a sudden influx?—No, I do not know of any sudden influx.

1232. Then I want to put this: You are aware that there is said to be, as probably is the case,

Mr. *Round*—continued.

20,000 or 30,000 acres of land uncultivated in Essex?—Yes, I believe that is so.

1233. And that that land can be obtained at a very low rental at the present moment—probably a great deal of it at no rental at all. What I wanted to ask you was this: whether, in your opinion, there are not considerable difficulties in the cultivation of land wherever land suffers at the present moment, and whether it would not be fair for Parliament to try and remedy, and to remove, those difficulties before any plan, such as you allude to, should be adopted—namely, of lending money to a new class of men to settle on the land?—I should not like to see men settle on the land under private ownership. My idea was that whatever land was required for this purpose should be acquired, either locally or nationally, before putting men upon it.

Chairman.

1234. This is to clear up the figures a little more: Is the Committee to understand that in your opinion when the frost has gone, and those who were suffering from non-employment on account of the frost are all employed again, there will remain five and a quarter millions of people in Great Britain and Ireland suffering hardship from want of employment?—I will not say that. With the beginning of Spring a large proportion (a steady proportion) of those who are unemployed to-day, who were not thrown out in consequence of the frost, will then be employed; but if I am asked as to what I think would be the number that would be permanently out all through the Summer I would certainly say it would not fall far short of a million of workers.

Tuesday, 26th February 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Acland.
Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. Billson.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Mather.
Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. Whiteley.
Mr. John Wilson (Durham).
Mr. John Wilson (Govan).
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

THE RIGHT HON. HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. FREDERIC EDWARD HILLEARY, L.L.D., called in and Examined.

Chairman.

1235. YOU are, I believe, clerk to the guardians of the poor of the West Ham Union?—Yes.

1236. Have you been so for a considerable time?—Yes, for 27 years.

1237. You have also, I believe, an official position in connection with the borough of West Ham?—Yes, I am town clerk.

1238. For how long have you been so?—Since the borough was incorporated in 1886, and for 13 years before that I was clerk to their predecessors.

1239. At that time it was the West Ham Local Board?—That was so.

1240. Of how many parishes does the union consist?—Seven parishes.

1241. Can you give the size and population by the latest returns?—Yes. The parish of West Ham consists of 4,667 acres, and the population at the census of 1891 was 204,902; Walthamstow 4,374 acres, population 46,346; Leyton 2,370 acres, population 43,906; Woodford 2,146 acres, population 10,984; East Ham 2,498 acres, population 28,741; Wanstead 2,002 acres, population 26,282; Little Ilford 768 acres, population 3,969; in all, 18,825 acres, with a population of 365,130.

1242. What is the nature of those parishes; are some of them urban and some rural?—More or less. West Ham is distinctly urban. Walthamstow is partly urban and partly rural; principally urban. The same applies to Leyton. Woodford is more rural than urban, but it is becoming urban. East Ham is about half and half, with a decided inclination to urban. Wanstead is more or less rural, and so is Little Ilford.

1243. The mass of the working population subject to want of employment and distress is in West Ham itself, is it not?—In West Ham principally, and Leyton; those are the two I have heard most about.

Chairman—continued.

1244. What is the rateable value of the union?—The rateable value of the union at Michaelmas, 1894, was 1,627,485*l.*

1245. Can you state what was expended in the maintenance of the poor per annum?—Yes; the cost of in-maintenance per annum was about 22,000*l.*, and out-relief, roughly, 33,000*l.*

1246. Is that on an average of years?—No, I think that was last year.

Mr. *Whiteley.*

1247. What was that equal to on the rates?—The poor rate, pure and simple, is about 1*s.* 1*d.*

1248. This 55,000*l.* represents 1*s.* 1*d.* on the rate, does it?—Yes; for poor purposes only.

Chairman.

1249. Can you state the amount of out-relief given in recent years, both in money and in the number of those relieved?—For certain months in certain years I can.

1250. Can you give it us in the winter months?—Yes; I can give it in the months of December and January. In December, 1892, and January, 1893, the out-relief given was 4,474*l.*, and the number of persons relieved 54,254; in December, 1893, and January, 1894, 6,176*l.* was expended in relief given, and 77,628 persons were relieved.

1251. Is that the number of persons relieved over and over again, or is it the number of separate persons relieved?—I think it would be the number of persons relieved over and over again.

Mr. *Mather.*

1252. Is that the number of cases?—These are the persons relieved. I have not got the number of cases.

Chairman.

1253. The same man in receipt of relief may appear again and again?—He might appear again and again, and probably does.

Mr. *Billson.*

1254. Will he be counted as one, or if he applies 20 times, as 20?—I think this must be the number of actual separate persons relieved; but I will ascertain that.

Chairman.

1255. Supposing a man was relieved on one day, and came up the next day and was again relieved, how would he be counted?—They would count him the first day, and he would be counted as a fresh one the next day.

1256. So that that total gives the number of acts of relief, and the act may occur in the same case again and again?—Yes.

1257. Could you ascertain the total number of separate persons who have been given relief within those months?—Yes, I could get those easily.

1258. Can you give the figures for 1894, on the same footing as the others you have given?—In December 1894, and January 1895, 6,204*l.* is the amount given in relief, and 75,596 persons were relieved.

1259. Can you state what the figures are for the week ending February 7th?—For the week ending February 7th, in the present year, 850*l.* was spent, and 11,298 persons were relieved; meaning for a period of two months at the same rate 90,384 persons; but it would not be fair to take it at that rate all the time.

1260. That large number, as I understand, would not represent 90,000 separate individuals, but 90,000 acts of relief?—Yes.

1261. Could you state how many men have been relieved in the labour yard?—In December 1893, and January 1894, 2,723 men were relieved in the labour yard; and in the same period for 1894-95, 2,589; whilst from the 31st of January to the 19th of February, both inclusive this year, 8,618 men were relieved.

1262. There again, would that be the number of separate acts of relief?—Yes.

1263. You think you could let the Committee know how many separate individuals that represent?—Yes, I will let the Committee know that. It will, of course, be noted that for the most part the same men were relieved day by day. These are very large figures, and are attributable to the exceptional severity of the weather, there being practically no work in the building and engineering trades, and not even ordinary road work.

1264. Can you state the numbers who were relieved on any individual day?—On the 31st January, 1895, there were 640 men in the labour yard; on February 2nd there were 537; on February 5th, 630; on February 6th, 137; on February 7th, 552; on February 8th, 455; on February 9th, 578; on February 11th, 570; on February 12th, 686; on February 13th, 760; on February 14th, 850; on February 15th, 899; on February 16th, 952; on February 18th, 680; on February 19th, 692; on February 20th, 683; on February 21st, 662; on February 22nd, 684; on February 23rd, 758; on February 25th, 277; and on February 26th (to-day), about 350.

Chairman—continued.

1265. Do you consider that it is in the power of the guardians, in conjunction with urban authorities, to find employment for those seeking it, in return for payment for their services?—No; there is no law allowing it.

1266. Is there a general opinion to that effect?—There is amongst the unemployed and others.

1267. What do you consider the position of the guardians in that respect; what is it that they are bound to do?—They are bound to relieve distress in any and every shape; they can apply the house test, or they can give outdoor relief in certain cases, or they can employ the labour test; but no one is allowed to starve. It is the duty of the guardians and their officers to see that the people are supplied with food, and so on, and there the guardians' functions cease.

1268. Is there any exceptional, or any further power that you hold the guardians have?—Under the 42nd and 43rd Victoria, chapter 54, section 10, they may, with the sanction of the Local Government Board, contribute to an institution which appears to the guardians to be calculated to render useful aid in the administration of the relief of the poor.

1269. Have you availed yourselves of the power given under that statute?—Last year we did to a limited extent.

1270. What did you do?—We sent 27 persons down in connection with the English Land Colonization Scheme to do farming work.

1271. Was that in the neighbourhood?—No, it was down by Southend.

1272. Are the powers given under the Statute you have just referred to generally regarded rather as referring to subscriptions to hospitals and other institutions of that sort?—That is so.

1273. In this case, did you receive the authority of the Local Government Board for what you did?—We did.

1274. They thought it was within your power to deal with these men in that way?—Yes.

1275. And you accordingly sent them to this English Colonization Society?—Yes.

1276. Did you pay for their maintenance, or make any contribution?—We paid 5*s.* per man per week.

1277. Did that last long; did they stay long?—It lasted a few weeks, I think; it was not a success. It would not really touch the fringe of the question.

1278. It could not be applied on a large scale?—No, not in a union like ours; it could not be managed.

1279. Before they were sent, were those men receiving out-relief or in-relief?—My recollection is that they were sent from the stone-yard.

1280. When you say it would not touch the fringe of the question, do you mean it could not deal with such a large number of men as to be of material assistance?—That is so.

1281. In itself, so far as it went, was it a success?—We did not hear anything about it one way or the other, it was so small; we paid the money, and in about three or four months they dropped it.

1282. What was the occasion of ceasing to pay the money—were the men discharged from the colony?—Yes.

1283. They

Chairman—continued.

1283. They found work elsewhere, perhaps?—Exactly; possibly in the district.

1284. Have the guardians received several deputations from the unemployed?—Yes.

1285. What was the result?—The county borough, in the first instance, had agreed to contribute 1,000*l.* to the scheme propounded by Mr. Hills, and they wrote to the guardians to ask them if they also would vote 1,000*l.* to that scheme, and the guardians said they would. The county borough afterward rescinded their resolution, and the guardians therefore fell out of it. The Leyton people then asked that 250*l.* should be given, against their 250*l.*, to enable them to put the unemployed to work on Wanstead Flats in laying out football and cricket pitches, and so on, and then the county borough sent a deputation up to the guardians, and they suggested that the guardians should give 500*l.*, to be added to the county borough's 500*l.*, so as to form a nucleus to set men to work in the borough. Upon that, having regard to the deputation of the unemployed asking the guardians to dig up their meadow-land at Forest House where they are going to build a new infirmary, matters were so unsatisfactory that they thought they had better have an interview with the President of the Local Government Board. He received them on Monday of last week, and they then asked if he would be good enough to explain to them their position, and whether the Local Government Board would allow them to deal with the moneys in the way suggested, and he said, certainly not; but what the Local Government Board were prepared to do was that if any urban district would employ a given number of men to be agreed upon between them and the guardians for one week, the guardians might in the next week relieve those persons without applying the out-door labour test; the question was asked by one of the deputation whether that would constitute those men paupers, and the answer was, yes.

1286. With the result of disenfranchising them, I suppose?—Quite so.

1287. Then you regard that, I understand, as rather the crux of the position?—I do entirely.

1288. That is to say, that whilst the men are demanding work, the guardians are only able to administer relief either with or without a test, such relief bringing with it the penalties attached thereto in the shape of loss of suffrage?—Yes.

1289. If this difficulty was got over, you consider the guardians have ample means at their disposal to deal with any distress that is brought to their notice?—Absolutely without any difficulty at all.

1290. Do you think the fact of having to come to the guardians for relief prevents the unemployed from applying—that is to say, that they do not like to come to the guardians?—That is so, and because of the disqualifications which it entails.

1291. You think the disqualifications weigh considerably with them?—Yes, and the loss of caste. They lose caste if they apply for out-relief or in-relief.

1292. Supposing the franchise disqualification was removed, they would still lose caste, would they not?—Yes, I should think so.

Chairman—continued.

1293. When you speak of disqualification, it is the disfranchisement qualification that you refer to, is it not?—Yes.

1294. Now, looking at the question from the county borough of West Ham point of view, you have presented a Petition to Parliament have you not?—Yes.

1295. Does that set out the position in West Ham?—Yes.

1296. Would you be good enough to read it?—"The humble Petition of the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the County Borough of West Ham sheweth: That your Petitioners are informed that the distress, owing to the want of employment throughout the county, is very great. That your Petitioners are informed, on the strength of a census recently completed, that in the County Borough of West Ham alone there are 10,000 men unemployed, and that this represents the distress of close upon 30,000 persons in all. That your Petitioners are elected for the purpose of carrying out the duties devolving upon them under 'The Municipal Corporations Act, 1882,' and the 'Public Health Act, 1875,' and various Statutes amending and enlarging the same. That in none of these Statutes is any duty cast upon your Petitioners of finding work for the unemployed, or relieving or administering to their distress, or that of their families. That in the years 1886, 1892, 1893, and 1895 your Petitioners have received certain letters from the Local Government Board suggesting that your Petitioners, after conferring with the Board of Guardians, should provide relief works of the nature therein-mentioned, viz., as follows," and then it mentions the various kinds of work as set out in the Local Government Board's Circular. And then the Petition goes on: "That your Petitioners have accordingly, as, and when occasion required, engaged the services of persons out of employment for the purpose of clearing roads, removing snow, and executing other works of that class. That your Petitioners have, during the present inclement season, adopted a similar course, and as a last resource, when everything else failed, they engaged men to pick up certain roads, which it was intended to pave. That your Petitioners are informed that the damage to the tools and implements, owing to the hardness of the surface of the ground, was not compensated for by the value of the work performed, and that only a few of the men, viz., about 200 per day, could be put on the work. That your Petitioners are advised that it is, if not impracticable, extremely unprofitable to perform at the present time any of the works suggested in the Circular. That your Petitioners have received many communications and deputations from philanthropists and the unemployed themselves, the latter of whom clamorously demand work, such deputations from the last-named being accompanied by hundreds of sympathisers who throng the Town Hall. That your Petitioners feel that their position is well nigh intolerable, for, owing to the Circular of the Local Government Board, your Petitioners are considered the proper authority to mitigate the evil, whilst they have no machinery for dealing therewith. Your Petitioners are there-

Chairman—continued.

fore of opinion that the time has now arrived when Parliament should effectively deal with the matter, and that the duty of finding employment for able-bodied persons out of work should be undertaken by the State, which alone possesses the means for properly dealing with a question of such vast magnitude."

1297. Let me ask you with regard to the census which you refer to as having been taken; by whom was that conducted?—It was conducted by the Labour Party, I believe, but there is a Councillor to follow me, Mr. Councillor Alden, who will be able to speak fully as to that. I cannot answer the question definitely.

1298. It was not an official census?—It was not an official census.

1299. Is it accepted by the guardians as being pretty accurate, or do they not express any opinion upon the subject?—I cannot say what their opinion is.

1300. In the last clause of the Petition that you read to us the Corporation say they have no machinery for dealing with the evil; can you say what machinery you would wish to have?—What I think the Council want is that if they are to be the means for mitigating this distress they should be definitely told so; and then, of course, they would get the necessary staff together to do it. Every case should be thoroughly enquired into, as it is with the guardians. We have no staff for that purpose, neither have we any moneys which we ought to expend for the purpose.

1301. You are now referring to the Corporation?—Yes.

1302. You are speaking now from the borough point of view?—Yes.

1303. The Borough of West Ham, though Metropolitan in its character, is not within the Metropolis, I believe?—That is so.

1304. You do not get any assistance, for instance, from the equalization of rates that prevails in the Metropolis?—We do not.

1305. Then your view, I understand, is that both the guardians and the borough are assumed to be able to deal with a large social question which they are, if not prohibited, at all events hindered by law from doing?—I think we are absolutely prevented by law from doing so; I would carry it as high as that.

1306. And which they have not the machinery at their command to grapple with—that is your view?—Exactly.

1307. Can you give the Committee any further particulars as to what you did last year?—The Council have endeavoured to cope with the difficulty by all the means in their power. Last year, acting with a joint relief committee, they undertook a number of works in the borough with regard to which I have here a report of the borough engineer (which is very short, and which I propose to read to the Committee presently), half the cost being contributed by the Council, and the other half by the committee. The works will probably be placed before the committee by others who took an active part in them. This year it was at first proposed and agreed to continue the work of the joint committee, but owing to the very strong objection by the various labour organisations in the borough

Chairman—continued.

to certain of the terms attached to the offer of a contribution of 1,000*l.* to the fund (principally that the men should be engaged at a minimum of 4*d.* per hour, and paid in addition such further sum as would bring up the price to the ordinary market value of the work executed) the Council decided to withdraw from the undertaking which, however, has been carried out by the committee independently.

1308. That is Mr. Hill's scheme, is it not?—Yes; that is Mr. Hill's scheme. In consequence of the urgent representations of deputations which waited upon the Council and upon the Mayor, it was decided to set on as many men as possible clearing the streets of ice and snow, and casual labourers to the number set out in the following statement were engaged in this work at 6*d.* per hour for six hours per day, in addition to which the Council had to transfer to the work the whole of their ordinary outdoor employés, amounting to some 350 per day: January 28th, 200; January 29th, 200; February 1st, 300; February 2nd, 600; February 4th, 216; February 6th, 322; February 7th, 460; and February 8th, 178, making a total of 2,416. Cost for labour, exclusive of cartage, 362*l.* This work being altogether inadequate to meet the pressing needs of the district, the Council decided to set on a number of men, notwithstanding the frost, to break up two streets which are about to be paved. With regard to this work, the Works Manager reports, on the 20th February, 1895, as follows:—"From February 6th to 19th, both inclusive, I have had 2,216 of the unemployed working in Quadrant Street and Bidder Street."

1309. That, again, is a cumulative number, I imagine?—That is so. "They work six hours per day, and are paid 6*d.* per hour. The cost for labour amounts to 332*l.* 8*s.*; cost of supervision, 9*l.* 15*s.*, and sharpening picks, &c., 22*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.*, making a total of 365*l.* 0*s.* 6*d.* They have excavated 550 loads of macadam, &c., each load costing 13*s.* 3*d.* The picks and wedges are damaged and worn to the extent of 50 per cent. of their original value. The excavated material would cost 3*s.* 6*d.* per load if done by our regular workmen." For work of 96*l.* value the Council, therefore, actually paid 365*l.*, exclusive of the damage to plant. Twenty-five men per day have also been to work in one of the recreation grounds for seven days, which brings the total number of men relieved by one or more days' work up to 4,807. The Council have at the present time works actually ready to commence to the value of 20,000*l.*, including construction of main sewers, paving roadways and footpaths, construction of retaining walls, &c., &c.; but, owing to the continuance of the frost, have been unable to commence them. The borough engineer has reported that it is impossible to execute such works during frosty weather, and that he could not take the responsibility of engineering work executed under such conditions.

1310. Can you give us the Report of the borough engineer to which you have referred?—Yes. This is an abstract from the Annual Report, 1893–94: "Relief works—The question of the unemployed has become chronic, and schemes are devised each winter to alleviate the yearly increasing demands for work; but each

year

Chairman—continued.

year the work is more limited in range. During the last winter relief registers were opened, and 2,173 names entered, viz., 1,099 in the northern division and 1,074 in the south. Work was found in snow removal, tree planting on highways, forming the recreation grounds at Plaistow and Canning Town, levelling and laying out cricket and football pitches, and in forming a storm water reservoir on Wanstead Flats; eight acres of ground so dealt with were outside the borough boundary. The number of men actually employed was 1,559, exclusive of the recreation grounds, and the total number of days worked, 99. Each man was given four consecutive days work of six hours, at 6*d.* per hour; some worked less of their own accord, and many were subsequently re-employed; the largest number at work in any one day being about 500. About 300*l.* was paid in wages for the removal of snow. As the falls were not heavy, and were followed by rapid thaws, a large part of this expenditure and consequent cartage was a concession to the demand for relief-labour. The wages paid in relief work on Wanstead Flats was 1,417*l.* 19*s.* 3*d.*, exclusive of plant and materials. The total amount expended on the works was about 1,800*l.*, of which 750*l.* was contributed by the Bethell Relief Committee, the charge on the rates being 1,050*l.* The amount expended (wages) in tree planting was 164*l.* 12*s.* 9*d.*, therefore 1,582*l.* 12*s.* was specially expended in relief wages. A large number of men were also directly employed by the Council in laying out the recreation grounds at Canning Town and Plaistow, the wages alone amounting at Canning Town to 3,161*l.* 11*s.* 5*d.*, and Plaistow 880*l.* 14*s.* 4*d.*, a total of 4,042*l.* 5*s.* 9*d.* in wages, exclusive of plant and material." "Under the present condition of things the matter of relief for the unemployed is recurring with greater intensity each winter. Some scheme should be devised more real and satisfactory in its results than the spasmodic and improvised action now periodically taken. The tendency of local efforts is to attract the needy to the place, while the relief given is not nearly equal to the demand, the permanent ratepayer is heavily weighted, and the results quite incommensurate with the expenditure. The question requires national rather than local treatment."

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

1311. That report is signed by the borough engineer?—Yes.

Chairman.

1312. Have you got any estimate of what this work would have cost if it had been executed in the ordinary way?—I have not in this instance; I could get the figure from the borough engineer, I have no doubt.

Mr. *Mather.*

1313. You gave one instance just now where there was a very startling difference between the sum actually expended and what the work would have cost if done by regular workmen in the ordinary way; that would not necessarily apply to all this work?—No, it could not apply to the same extent. The extract I have just read is from last year's report, 1893–94. The conditions were not the same, but still I can say the work was not equal to the amount paid.

Chairman.

1314. The great discrepancy between the value of the material as obtained otherwise, and the value of the material obtained by the labour as described in the Works Manager's Report this year which you quoted, was due to the fact of the labour having been conducted in hard weather, was it not?—Certainly, to a large extent. The same conditions, more or less, would apply to the other relief works, but I cannot say in what ratio.

1315. Mr. Angel is the borough engineer, is he not?—Yes.

1316. Will you tell the Committee what is the population of West Ham, what is the general nature of the employment of the people, and the nature of the population?—There are a great number of general labourers and artisans of all descriptions — carpenters, bricklayers, joiners, masons, paviors, navvies, engineers' assistants, and so forth.

1317. Could you put in the statement of the callings of the unemployed as given by themselves, which is incorporated in Mr. Angel's report?—Yes.

[*The following Statement was handed in*:—]

CALLINGS OF THE UNEMPLOYED,

As stated by them.

Bakers	14
Barber	1
Barge builder	1
Barman	1
Bass dressers	7
Billsticker	1
Blacksmiths	9
Blade forger	1
Bookbinders	2
Carried forward	37

Brought forward	37
Boiler cutter	1
Boiler makers	5
Boot and shoemakers	7
Bottle blower	1
Bottler	1
Brass finishers	5
Bricklayers and brickmakers	24
Brushmakers	11
Carried forward	92

Callings of the Unemployed, as stated by them—*continued.*

Brought forward	92
Builder's hand	1
Butcher	1
Butler	1
Cab-driver	1
Cabinet maker	1
Candle maker	1
Carmen	39
Carpenters	22
Cellarman	1
Chimney-sweep	1
Chippers	5
Clerks	3
Clock maker	1
Coach builder	1
Coach painters	3
Coal Porters	8
Collier	1
Compositors and type letterers	2
Confectioners	2
Corn porter	1
Costermonger	1
Dairymen	2
Drillers	13
Drummer to smith	1
Engineers, engine-drivers, and stokers	26
Fire and furnacemen	11
Fitters	35
Flour and corn mill hand	1
French polisher	1
Gardeners	15
Gas fitter	1
Glass blowers	2
Grocers' assistants	2
Groom	1
Hair-dresser	1
Hammermen	13
Harness makers	2
Hawkers	10
Helpers	8
Horsekeepers and stablemen	4
Hosier	1
Iron caulkers	2
Iron cutter	1
Iron moulder	1
Iron workers	3
Jewellers	5
Junk grinder	1
Labourers	1,607
Lather	1
Machinists	2
Mat maker	1
Messenger	1
Miller	1
Millers in charge of engine	2
Carried forward	1,967

Brought forward	1,967
Millwrights	2
Mixers	2
Navvies	5
Newsagent	1
Oilman	1
Packers	2
Painters	71
Paperhangers	4
Paperstainers	2
Paviors	5
Perfumer	1
Piler	1
Plasterers	11
Platelayers	3
Plate planner	1
Platers	8
Porters	2
Portmanteau maker	1
Printers	3
Rammer	1
Rivetters	16
Rope maker	1
Sailors	2
Sawyers	4
Scaffolders	2
Seamen	6
Shingler	1
Ship-rigger	1
Ship's firemen and trimmers	2
Shipwright	1
Shopman	1
Shunter	1
Skin dresser	1
Slaters	2
Slate polisher	1
Smiths	8
Smiths' strikers	2
Sorter	1
Stevedores	3
Stonemaker	1
Stonemasons	2
Sugar boiler	1
Sugar refiner	1
Tailors	2
Telegraph instrument makers	2
Tin plate worker	1
Warehousemen	3
Watchmen	2
Weaver	1
Wheeler	1
Wheelwright	1
Wiremen	1
No trade mentioned	4
Total	2,173

Chairman—continued.

1318. Very much the larger proportion come under the head of labourers, do they not?—Yes, I believe that is so.

1319. Have you a large population working outside the borough, but living in the borough?—I believe there are a considerable number, but I could not give you any reliable information, nor do I think I could get that. I believe it is generally known that there is a considerable number.

1320. There are people for instance, are there not, working in the Metropolis who come into West Ham to reside?—Yes.

1321. Have you any reason to believe that there is much of this want of employment and distress among that portion of your community?—I cannot distinguish them.

1322. There is a shipbuilding business, is there not, in the Borough of West Ham?—Yes, the Thames Ironworks.

1323. What is the position of that industry?—At the present time, I believe, they have received an order for a ship for the Japanese Government, and I think that industry is looking up; but for some time past there has been very little work there.

1324. But the men employed there are specialists, are they not?—I should imagine so.

1325. If they are not employed there they would go to other parts of the country where there is shipbuilding, in order to get employment, would they not?—Possibly.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

1326. Just to clear up the point about the population, may I ask whether it is not also the case that a number of people who live outside West Ham come into the borough to work?—I have never heard that suggested; there may be some, for aught I know.

Mr. *Mather.*

1327. I understood you to say that the Board of Guardians have no power, under the Acts you quoted, to find employment for those who apply for it?—That is so.

1328. Then, are we to assume that the employment which really is found by the Guardians, such as the occupations you have named, is simply provided as a labour test?—That is so.

1329. And that all persons undertaking that labour test at once qualify as paupers?—That is so.

1330. And therefore lose their rights of citizenship?—Certainly.

1331. May the Committee understand that the arrangement which the Corporation of West Ham suggested to the County Council authorities to join funds and join their efforts to find work outside, your particular district was not allowed by the Local Government Board?—That is so.

1332. It was held to be *ultra vires*?—That is so.

1333. You were allowed, however, by the Local Government Board to make an experiment, and to send some of your persons, who were receiving indoor relief, to the farm promoted by the English Land Colonization Society?—Yes.

Mr. *Mather*—continued.

1334. Do you know how many were sent?—Speaking from recollection, I think it was 27.

1335. When you made the remark that it did not touch the fringe of the question, are we to understand that you referred only to the fraction of assistance given in view of the great number that could have been relieved in that way, if you had had power to do so?—That was my meaning.

1336. You have formed no opinion yourself upon the character of the employment so given upon this land settlement of the English Colonization Society?—I have not, but if it could be done on a large scale of course it would be very much preferable to pauperising the people.

1337. If it could be done on a large scale, and in such manner, and by such a plan, that the labour contributed by those persons whom you would send should be rewarded according to its value, you think that would be a relief to the guardians, if they had the means of adopting such a plan?—Yes, I think it would.

1338. You have been asked to try and get some information about the history of this case where 27 men were sent down to the farm; you spoke very strongly on the point that no work could be given at all by the Board of Guardians, not even in combination with the County Council, without this pauperising element being introduced?—Yes.

1339. In your application to the Local Government Board to permit you to do this, they gave permission only on the consideration that you would treat each individual applying for or sent to such work as becoming disfranchised and losing the rights of citizenship?—Yes.

1340. You have spoken very strongly, I presume, on behalf of the Corporation, following the Petition which you read to us which was presented to Parliament, to the effect that your Council want power to deal with the distress, and funds allowed for the purpose: if you had that power, and had a scheme provided by which funds could be raised, would you have the slightest difficulty in meeting the circumstances of West Ham, such as they have been, during this most acute period, in a manner quite satisfactory to the public, and to the individual cases?—I do not think any sort of work in the severe weather we have recently had would be satisfactory at all.

1341. You said yourself that you suffered so much from the demands for work, which you could not satisfy, that the position had become intolerable, because no machinery was possessed by you to deal with it?—Yes.

1342. Then I understood you went on to say, that if the Council had power to deal with distress, and there were some special arrangements made by the State for funds to meet it, you could have met the circumstances under which you, as a local authority, suffered?—I did not mean to convey that. What I meant was that if Parliament, in its wisdom, put upon the Corporation to relieve distress, it should be stated in the Act of Parliament what they were to do, so that they might provide their machinery to do it, not that they wished it, they do not.

1343. I understand from your Petition to the House of Commons you did ask the State to

Mr. *Mather*—continued.

come to your relief, both as to the provision and finding of work, and also as to the means to support it?—I do not think it quite went to that. The Petition concludes in these words: "Your Petitioners are therefore of opinion that the time has now arrived when Parliament should effectively deal with the matter, and that the duty of finding employment for able-bodied persons out of work should be undertaken by the State, which alone possesses the means for properly dealing with a question of such vast magnitude."

1344. Are we to infer from that, that you think it would not be possible for the local authorities to take the administration of any scheme which the State might make, but that it would have to be done by State officers altogether?—No, I do not say that. I think that the Council would take on anything that was put upon them.

1345. Therefore, the local authorities, having the power, and having the machinery, and having the fund set forth by the State, and provided by the State, would have no difficulty in themselves administering the scheme?—They would be able to administer the scheme, whatever it is, but not to do useful work.

1346. When the borough engineer, in the extract from his report, which you read, spoke of the question of the unemployed as having become chronic in your district, and of the increasing demands for work each winter, that, I think, points to the same thing—that is, that locally you see no way out of relieving this chronic state of things, and that all the authorities have made up their minds that the State must now come to help you?—They think the State should say who is to do it, and how it is to be done.

1347. The borough engineer says that schemes are devised each winter to meet the yearly increasing demands for work. In reference to the work already found, even with the pauperising element which was introduced for persons seeking employment, are we to understand that, taking the work as a whole, the work cost more in actual money than you would have paid to a contractor for the same work done, who would have made a profit out of it in the ordinary way of business?—I think you may take that to be so, no doubt.

1348. Among the 10,000 persons reported in your Petition to the House of Commons as being out of work at that particular time, what proportion, roughly speaking, would you think were men following a trade, or men belonging to the regular working classes, having definite occupations?—I should think about two-thirds.

1349. Two-thirds of the 10,000, you think, would be men having definite occupations, including skilled artisans?—I should think more than two-thirds.

1350. Would you put it as high as 8,000 out of the 10,000?—No, I should possibly be misleading the Committee. I really do not know the proportion.

1351. Have you any means of ascertaining approximately what would be the number of skilled persons or persons following definite trades?—I think Mr. Councillor Alden will be able to give you that pretty accurately.

Mr. *Mather*—continued.

1352. Could you tell us from your own knowledge whether a great number of persons among the 10,000 did not apply for relief in consequence of the pauperising effect of such application?—I could not answer that question.

1353. Would there be any considerable number?—I should think a great many.

Mr. *Jackson.*

1354. You gave us the figures for each of the days of the number of men employed at the labour yard?—Yes.

1355. I do not ask you for details, but could you say from your knowledge whether the numbers this year that you have given us are largely in excess of what they were last year?—Yes, no doubt they are.

1356. There was a labour yard last year?—Yes, there has been for years past.

1357. You think the number employed in the labour yard this year has been larger?—Yes, considerably.

1358. Has that been due, do you think, to the frost, or is it attributable to other causes also?—To the frost.

1359. Mainly to the frost?—Mainly to the frost.

1360. Have you any reason to suppose that there has been an influx into your district from outside at this particular time?—Not more than ordinarily.

1361. You say not more than ordinarily. Do you think that in winter time there is an influx from the outside?—There is a general idea that a great many people live within the borough, and go to and fro to their work.

1362. Was there at that particular time an influx from the outside of people who are not residents within the district?—I do not think so.

1363. You spoke of a considerable number of casual labourers having been put on to work. Was any information obtained as to whether they were resident within the district?—Yes; no one was taken on who had not been in the district for six months.

1364. That was ascertained?—Yes.

1365. You spoke of the English Land Colonisation Company. Is that land company still going on?—I do not know; we are not sending any men from our union now.

1366. You said that, in your opinion, the crux of the question was disfranchisement; what do you mean by the crux of the question being disfranchisement?—What I mean to say is that the whole position hinges on pauperism. The guardians have no difficulty whatever in dealing, and indeed they have every power to deal, with distress, only the people who want relief say: "We want work, and we do not want charity;" and therefore if in answer to them you can say, "Very well then, we will take away the disqualification if we have not got work to give you; you can go to the guardians and get relief, and it shall not do you any harm;" that is one way of dealing with it.

1367. You mean if there was a power in the guardians to give relief in money or in kind, or in both, that the rates of the district are sufficient to bear any burden that would be put upon them?—I think so.

1368. Are

Mr. *Jackson*—continued.

1368. Are the rates in West Ham higher than the surrounding districts?—The rates in West Ham are about 8*s.* in the £, but the amount which we pay in the union for poor is only about 1*s.* 1*d.* Looking at the population of the union, that does not occur to me as being at all high. The School Board rate is 2*s.* 3*d.* I believe that is what kills us. The district rates are not so very much. I think they are 3*s.* 4*d.* When I speak of the poor rate, of course there is the county and police rate, and the poor rate is more than 1*s.* in the £.

1369. Is the School Board rate of 2*s.* 3*d.* simply for the Board Schools within your own district?—Yes.

1370. You have a separate School Board, I presume?—Yes; the School Board rate is over 2*s* ; I believe it is 2*s.* 3*d.*; and it will go higher.

1371. The poor rate for the purpose of poor relief in your district compares very favourably with the poor rates in the districts adjoining?—I have not compared them, but I should think it would compare very favourably, excepting that in the districts adjoining, or some of them, they will not give out-relief at all—they relieve every body or very nearly every body in the house.

1372. You do not perhaps know what the rate in the £ on the average, calculated on the rateable value of the rates received, is for London generally?—I do not.

1373. I think you said you were outside the area benefited by the Equalisation of Rates Bill?—That is so.

1374. Would you have benefited if you had been within the area?—I believe we should.

1375. You think you would have benefited to some extent?—To some extent, at all events.

1376. Has there been a large increase of the population of West Ham in recent years?—An enormous increase ; it has doubled, and doubled again, in two censuses, and now, though officially it is 204,000, it is nearer 250,000.

1377. Do you happen to know whether the figures of the published census show the occupations of the people in West Ham—would that information be available?—Yes, I think it would.

1378. Perhaps you will enquire, and if it is available let us have it?—I will do so.

1379. How many members does your Corporation consist of?—48.

1380. Was the Petition to the House of Commons adopted unanimously?—Yes; I think it was.

1381. Do you think that the increased number of applicants for relief this year is due to any exceptional distress as compared with last year?—No, I do not think it is. I think it has mainly to do with the exceptional weather.

1382. That is to say, you think that a considerable proportion of the population is ordinarily engaged upon outdoor work?—Yes.

1383. And therefore thrown out by the weather for the time being?—Yes.

1384. Is that over now, do you think?—I should think so; the sun is getting power.

1385. In the daily figures of the men in the labour-yard you gave us I notice by that on Saturdays there were usually the largest number employed?—I think they pay a little more on Saturdays.

Mr. *Jackson*—continued.

1386. Do they work a shorter day?—I do not think they work a shorter day; they get double pay for Sunday if they have been in for so many days in the week.

1387. That would account to some extent for it?—That would account for it to some extent.

1388. I see that the figures have fallen from 952 on the 16th to 277 on the 25th, and the estimate for to-day is 350?—Yes.

1389. That would indicate that the worst is past?—Decidedly, judging by the previous figures.

1390. Is the Corporation at present employing any of these additional men?—I think they are employing a few of them on the roads I referred to.

1391. Not many?—They may be employing more as the weather gets more open, in the ordinary course.

Mr. *Renshaw.*

1392. You stated the population according to the census of 1891 for the parishes out of which your union is formed ; could you give the Committee the corresponding figures for 1881?—Certainly. I have not got them with me, but I will send them up to you.

1393. And perhaps also you could give them for 1871?—Yes.

1394. I gather that there has been a very rapid increase in the population?—Yes, I can give the figures for the last four censuses.

1395. With regard to the occupations of the men working within the union. Are there any large number of factories?—Yes, a great number of factories.

1396. What are the principal factory employments in the district?—There are two or three sugar manufactories, jam factories, candles, and soap, in fact, pretty nearly all sorts.

1397. Are there any paper mills?—I do not think there are any paper mills.

1398. With regard to the very rapid increase in the population, which you told us had taken place since 1881, I presume that would lead the Committee to form the opinion correctly, that a very considerable population had been engaged in the building trade?—That is so.

1399. Has there been a corresponding increase in the amount of industrial employment, in connection with the docks, or work of that kind?—Yes, there is always a good deal going on at the docks.

1400. But are we to understand that the population has increased more rapidly than the means of occupation of the population have been developed?—I do not know that I could say that exactly. As the population increases, of course there is, necessarily, more pauperism in the aggregate. But if you take the figures over the last 10 or 12 years, I do not know that you could say that there is much more pauperism, corrected by the population, than there was before.

1401. But the information that has come before the Committee is, I think, to the effect that there is special destitution in West Ham, as compared with the rest of the Metropolis?—Well, I cannot say about that. I should not say it was so myself.

Mr. *Renshaw*—continued.

1402. As an instance, is it not the case that no other Corporation has taken the course that your Corporation has taken in petitioning the House of Commons in regard to this matter?—I believe some others are about to do so. I do not think anyone else has done so yet.

1403. Does not that show an exceptional state of things in West Ham?—Of course, we have a great number of people to deal with, and we have been pressed to find employment that we cannot find, and therefore we say, Let the Legislature deal with the position.

1404. Why should your position with regard to the demand made upon you to find employment for relief be different from that of other parts of the Metropolis?—I do not suppose it is. I think that would apply all round all over the country.

1405. You think the state of West Ham, relatively to the rest of the Metropolis, is not exceptional?—I should not say so.

1406. I should like to ask, with regard to the disqualification which at present arises where relief is obtained, do you suggest that the law should be altered in regard to that disqualification?—I suggest that that would be one way of meeting the discontent.

1407. Would not such an alteration have the effect of making it probable that a large number of individuals would apply for relief?—Yes.

1408. And, consequently, your rates would increase?—Yes. The alteration might take the form of a condition that disqualification should not be imposed if the Local Government Board consented to waive it; you might leave it to them to decide.

1409. What I gather from you on that point is this: that in regard to the ordinary administration of the Poor-law you would retain the existing disqualification, but you would suggest that power should be given to the Local Government Board, at exceptional periods of distress, to do away with the existing disqualification during the continuance of those periods?—I think that would meet the case, so far as the unemployed are concerned. We should say to them: There is your relief, or the money to keep yourselves going under these exceptional circumstances, and you are not hurt in any way, and there is an end of it.

1410. But you think it would be better, having regard to the general administration of the Poor-law, and the greater protection to the public and of the ratepayers, that any exceptional proposals to deal with this disqualification should apply only to periods of exceptional distress?—Yes, I do think so, personally; I am speaking only my personal opinion.

Mr. *Whiteley.*

1411. With regard to your expenditure for the poor, I understand your indoor relief for last year was 22,000*l.*, and the outdoor relief was 33,000*l.*?—Yes.

1412. A total of 55,000*l.*, which was 1*s.* 1*d.* on the rates?—Yes.

1413. Do you know whether that is higher or lower than any previous annual payment in the last ten years?—It is very nearly the same I think.

Mr. *Whiteley*—continued.

1414. That is the normal payment, is it?—Of course, it is larger than previous years in actual money, but then the rateable value goes up.

1415. Then, so far, 1*s.* 1*d.* in the £ is your high-water mark of Poor-law relief during the last ten years?—Poor-law relief, pure and simple.

1416. Did I understand you to suggest that the Corporation should have power to distribute the relief?—No, I do not. I suggest that if the duty is put upon them, they ought to have their position defined; they ought either to be the authority to deal with it, or they ought not.

1417. Do you think it desirable that you should have, in any given area, two local authorities distributing relief?—No, I do not, distinctly.

1418. With regard to the question of disfranchisement, do you believe it to be possible, or desirable, that a state of exceptional distress should be recognised by the law, and that it should be in the hands of the guardians to notify to the Local Government Board that exceptional distress does exist, and that after such a notification disfranchisement should not ensue upon the receipt of relief, and relief should be given in any form?—I was following rather the suggestion of the President of the Local Government Board in which he said that he would give the Board leave to do away with the labour test temporarily. It is only carrying it one stage further. If you do not put any test on, if you take the disqualification off, that as it seems to me would meet the case. I am not suggesting it myself.

1419. I am suggesting to you that exceptional distress should be recognised by the law, and that it should be in the hands of the Poor-law authorities to judge as to when exceptional distress is existing in any union or any locality, and that it should be likewise in their hands to notify to the Local Government Board that such a state of affairs exists?—I quite agree.

1420. And that after such a notification that they should be in a position to distribute relief in any form they like, and (while that state of exceptional distress lasts), without disfranchisement?—Yes.

1421. You say at the present time the guardians have the power to give relief in any form?—Subject to modification; I mean with regard to the outdoor relief prohibitory order, under which they have to give at least half in kind.

1422. Then it amounts to this, does it not, that they have not the power that you said they had, but they are restricted at the present time; they could not open a soup-kitchen, for instance, could they?—I do not know why they should not. I should think they could, if they liked. I should think the Local Government Board would sanction it. It it just the very thing that would be desirable to do, to put soup-kitchens all over the place.

1423. My idea would be that the state of the law should be that, in cases of exceptional distress, the guardians should be in the position to distribute any kind of relief they liked, and that, during that time, disfranchisement should not follow; do you think that is possible?—Perfectly possible.

1424. You

Mr. *Bartley.*

1424. You have just said that in your opinion it would be a very good thing if the guardians had power to open soup-kitchens all over the place; is that your opinion as clerk to the board of guardians?—Yes.

1425. You think that would be a way of meeting the exceptional distress?—Yes; I speak of soup-kitchens on a large scale—not confined to soup only, but extending to commissariat generally.

1426. A sort of open feeding for everybody?—For people who are proved to be in distress.

1427. Would you have any test?—I certainly would; I would have inquiries made into what the applicants were, what they had been doing, and all about them.

1428. Would that be done before you gave them any relief?—If possible.

1429. But if it was not possible?—Then I should give them the relief, and find out afterwards, and put a penalty upon them for obtaining this indulgence by fraudulent pretences, as the guardians can do now.

1430. You are acquainted, I presume, with the history of this movement during the last 40 or 50 years, since the Act of 1834. Has not all experience shown that that way of dealing with distress only aggravates it?—It is a very large problem, and I do not suppose two people think alike on it. If there is exceptional distress of this character, it has to be met by exceptional means.

1431. As I understand from your evidence, the amount of your Poor-law relief is not excessive at present, and you do not consider it excessive?—Not in normal times.

1432. But you consider there is a great amount of suffering on the part of persons who will not come for relief?—Yes.

1433. And your desire is that some power should be given for employing those persons in some way or other?—Yes.

1434. Do I understand that you think the locality is not able to do that?—I do not say that.

1435. You think the locality is able to do that?—Of course, they have to do it—they must relieve the people.

1436. No, I understood you to say that they do not relieve those people?—If the people do not come for relief they cannot relieve them. I cannot say that we are bankrupt at West Ham; there is a large rateable value of nearly one million, and if it is put upon us to do it we can do it.

1437. What does a penny in the pound bring you?—Something between 3,000*l.* and 4,000*l.*—about 3,500*l.*

1438. I thought you said the rateable value was 1,600,000*l.*?—That is the union.

1439. You were referring to West Ham itself?—Yes.

1440. Still, the whole union is for the Poor-law?—Yes.

1441. Therefore a 1*d.* rate brings in nearly 7,000*l.*?—Yes.

1442. Therefore there is ample means in the Union of West Ham for providing for everything that is wanted?—Yes.

1443. You consider that the condition of poverty is really due, to a large extent, to the

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

fact that the people will not come for relief because of the disqualification which it involves?—Yes, to a large extent.

1444. You wish the State to grant a sort of special relief by which those persons can be benefited without losing their qualification for voting, and so on?—I only suggest that as a way out of the difficulty. I quite appreciate the difficulties of the position.

1445. If anything of that sort were done, would it not tend to an enormous increase in the number of demands for relief?—I think it would increase them.

1446. Do you think it would increase them very largely indeed?—Considerably.

1447. Do you not think it would not ultimately inflict immense hardship upon the people themselves by making them dependent upon outside assistance?—That is also quite possible.

1448. You think even if such a scheme were adopted, it is quite possible it might inflict as much hardship as it did good?—It would be certain to do good in one way and bad in another.

1449. Would it not undermine all the efforts of self-dependence on the part of the people, or largely tend in that direction?—I do not know that it would—there would still be a sort of stigma in it.

1450. But I thought your idea was to do away with the stigma?—It would do away with the legal stigma, but still the mere application to any one for relief is a moral stigma—it marks people.

1451. In your Petition to the House of Commons you say you think the State should do it; could you tell us in what way the State could do this better than the locality?—They could nationalise the poor and make it a national charge—that would do away with the settlement and removal business—they could reclaim lands, and could draft their able-bodied paupers to the particular spot where the work was—that is one way of dealing with it.

1452. Do you think those are practical ways of dealing with the matter?—I have not gone sufficiently into the matter to know.

1453. In what way would the State be better able to cope with the large mass of the unemployed in West Ham than West Ham itself is?—For instance, if they were reclaiming the Wash, they could draft down there any number of able-bodied people from West Ham, as from other localities. They would be wanted for a good time, and they could keep them there. They would be then earning their living and rising out of pauperism.

1454. Do you mean to say, as a practical man, that the State, in managing men out of work in all the districts of the United Kingdom, could possibly do it as well as those who live in the locality and know all the circumstances?—You would have to have local organisers, no doubt, as well, so that you would practically have the board of guardians also, as now.

1455. The difference, in fact, would be that the money would come from the central fund instead of from the local rates?—You would have the power of drafting from the different parts of the country to the centre, where the work was

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

wanted, and also of relieving the workhouses from time to time, so that one would not be overcrowded while others were empty.

1456. As regards the employment that has been given in West Ham, I understand all the unemployed are paid 6*d.* an hour; is that so?—Yes.

1457. Is not that the ordinary trade union wages for that sort of work?—I think it is—or rather I think 6½*d.* is the ordinary wage.

1458. Then it is practically the same?—It is practically the same.

1459. Then a man engaged in this work is just as well off as if he was engaged in the same occupation which he gets himself in connection with his own trade?—Practically.

1460. Do you think that is a desirable system?—I do not. When I say it is practically the same, there is this exception, that they are not engaged day by day, and the difference between them is that men working in the ordinary way, when they are in regular work, have six days' work in the week, whereas these unemployed men are only put on for perhaps two or three days, so that they do not get in effect their trade union wages, although hour per hour for the work they do they get their trade union wages.

1461. They are nominally engaged at the same wages, but for only half the time in the week?—Yes.

1462. Do you not think that the system of paying practically trade union wages for such work as this tends to make people dependent upon that wage?—I do not quite follow the question.

1463. Is a man engaged in this work, who gets his full trade union wages while he can get work, as likely to look out for work for himself as if he were receiving a much smaller wage?—If he wants work he is only getting under this system three days work in the week instead of six, so that he would be getting double money if he got his proper employment.

1464. Still, he would be receiving for the three days the same amount of wages as if he had employment of his own?—Yes; but in the week he would get three days less work and three days less money.

1465. Is it not very possible he would only get three days work in the week at his ordinary occupation on his own account?—It is possible, not probable.

1466. Would it not be probable in winter?—Yes, in winter.

1467. We are talking about the winter months in this matter. Would not this system of paying full wages be very likely to have the tendency to prevent a man trying to find work for himself?—The less you pay them on this relief work the more anxious they would be to get to their own work.

1468. Was not that a strong recommendation in the Report of the 1834 Commission?—Yes; and it is also mentioned in the Local Government Board Circular.

1469. Was not that the idea that led Mr. Hills to make the suggestion he did in regard to the rate of wages?—Yes.

1470. Do you know the reason why that offer was refused?—It was accepted first, and then refused afterwards.

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

1471. Was it the unemployed themselves who refused it?—It was the Council, on the application of the various trades unions.

1472. Then was it the trades unions that stopped it, and not the unemployed?—I cannot answer as to what stopped it—the Council passed the resolution. It was following on certain letters that they received.

1473. Had you received Mr. Hill's conditions?—Yes.

Chairman.

1474. Did either body make an open representation to the Council—either the unemployed by deputation or the trades unions?—Yes, the trades unions had a large deputation.

Mr. *Bartley.*

1475. Was it then known that the work that was done owing to bad weather and other circumstances was so very expensive, and that its absolute value was so much less than it cost?—No, it was not known then.

1476. Did not the trades unions know it at that time?—I do not know about the trades unions; it was not present to my mind at all.

1477. Do not you think yourself it would be an easier solution to pay men on these works considerably under the ordinary wage in the idea that they would by that means look out for other work, and as soon as possible relieve the parish of having to provide work for them?—That was the view of the Local Government Board on it, and it seems very feasible from that point of view that it should do so. I believe it would myself.

1478. The Corporation, I suppose, thought so at first, did they not?—The Corporation accepted the original circular—they thought it was sound at that time.

1479. Why did they think it not sound when they rescinded their resolution?—The whole of the organised labour in the borough thought it was not, and I suppose that was the reason.

1480. Did the unemployed represent an organised labour?—The deputation said they represented an organised labour, employed and unemployed.

1481. Have you heard of the scheme of the honourable Member for the division concerning a Government grant of 100,000*l*?—Yes.

1482. Do you agree with that?—It is a question whether a sum of money proportionate to that expended by the locality under exceptional circumstances would not be just.

1483. How much do you think you would get out of that 100,000*l.* in proportion to your population?—I suppose about 4,000*l.*

1484. Is not the population of the Union 365,000?—Yes.

1485. Is not that, roughly speaking, a hundredth part of the population of the United Kingdom, within a trifle?—Yes, about that.

1486. Then you would only get 1,000*l*?—That would be all, apparently. I have not worked it out.

1487. Do you think 1,000*l.* would have met the difficulty of all this trying time?—No.

1488. You think that 100,000*l.* would not have been sufficient?—It would not have been sufficient.

1489. The

Chairman.

1489. The honourable Member for West Ham did not say that 100,000*l.* would meet the difficulty. What he suggested was that it would go to tide over the present distress for the next month or two.—Yes.

Mr. *Bartley.*

1490. You think such a sum as you would get as your share would not have been in any way adequate?—A thousand pounds would certainly not be adequate.

1491. At any rate, a penny rate would produce many times more than your share of the fund of 100,000*l.*?—Quite so.

1492. There is no question whatever, as I understand, as regards the wealth of West Ham; in your opinion, you have ample funds to meet any distress if it is paid for through the guardians?—Certainly.

1493. You have no doubt about that?—Absolutely none.

Mr. *Bolton.*

1494. With regard to West Ham, there are a great many prosperous manufactories in the district, are there not?—There are.

1495. Has not the establishment of those manufactories, from time to time, within the district brought population down there?—Yes.

1496. So that the population has grown with the increase of manufactures and trade in the district?—That is so.

1497. There is also a residential portion of the borough, is there not?—Yes; the north-east portion of the borough is residential—pretty nearly entirely.

1498. Have the manufacturing industries very much changed in West Ham recently?—I do not think they have.

1499. Therefore, there is a reasonably steady demand for labour in West Ham?—Yes.

1500. Special distress like this is to be attributed, is it not, in the main to this severe weather?—I think so.

1501. With regard to the experiment you made under the 42nd and 43rd Victoria, chap. 54, in sending 27 men to the colonization farm, will you prepare for the information of the Committee a statement showing the circumstances under which the experiment was made; what supervision there was over it while it was being made; what information you obtained with regard to its progress, what the result of it was; how it ended; and what the financial cost was to West Ham?—Yes.

1502. You referred to the suffrage disfranchisement as being the main objection people have to going to the guardians for relief; surely the fact that by obtaining relief they will not be able to exercise their vote once in two, or three, or five years is hardly a strong deterrent, is it?—I should have thought not; it would not be to me, but that is what they say it is.

1503. Is not the discredit attached to living upon money compulsorily taken from other persons—living, in fact, upon the rates—a far stronger deterrent?—I think they object to that too.

1504. If the disqualification of their exercising the vote were to be removed, do you think it

Mr. *Bolton*—continued.

would, or ought to, go any appreciable way towards making people less disinclined to apply for relief?—I do not think it ought, but I think it would.

1505. But, as a fact, do you think that nine out of ten of these people ever consider about their votes when they come for relief?—They consider going to the guardians very much.

1506. But do they consider the matter of losing their votes?—It is one of the considerations.

1507. Is it not really the stigma of pauperism generally, rather than this particular disqualification, that influences them?—I should think it is with a good many of them.

1508. How would you remove the stigma of pauperism?—I think it is irremoveable myself. To my mind, I do not think it matters a bit whether there is any disqualification or not. The fact is that you cannot help yourself, and you have to go to some one else to help you.

1509. Therefore you would modify your statement a little, would you not, that the suffrage disfranchisement is the main difficulty?—It is one of the principal difficulties. I may explain that my last answer only applied to my own point of view. I am informed and believe that the unemployed look at it in a very serious way.

1510. The Council of West Ham is largely influenced by the trade organizations of West Ham, is it not?—Naturally.

1511. The trades union organizations of West Ham practically control the elections, do they not?—I should not say that.

1512. They largely influence them?—Yes, they largely influence them.

1513. Therefore, any representations made by the organized trades unions of West Ham would exercise an almost paramount influence over the Council, would it not?—I cannot say that. They always receive the Council's best attention.

1514. Did the Council ever seriously consider Mr. Hill's offer before they accepted it in the first instance?—Mr. Hills was there and explained the position, and the Council seemed to think it was a very good idea; at any rate, it was an experiment in the right direction, and they passed it, I think, with five dissentients.

1515. When they reversed that decision on the representations of the Trades Unions of West Ham, what were the arguments put before the Council to induce them to alter their former decision?—That labour was being cheapened.

1516. Did not the Council of West Ham point out to the deputation that the circumstances were of a very exceptional character, and that they were not dealing with the question of cheapening labour, but dealing with funds placed at their disposal to assist the unemployed in giving them relief?—I do not think it was very carefully argued out; it was a somewhat stormy meeting; the speakers themselves had very strong views indeed.

1517. And expressed them very strongly?—And expressed them extremely strongly.

1518. In fact, do you mean to say that there was a certain amount of dictation exercised to the Council?—No; I mean that they spoke their views very straight and very forcibly.

1519. And the Council at that meeting, without remonstrating or discussing the matter, gave way?

Mr. *Bolton*—continued.

way ?—They discussed the matter and rescinded their former resolution.

1520. Was there any division taken ?—Yes.

1521. What were the numbers on the division ?—I have not got the numbers; I think they were about 11 to 22, or something like that.

1522. I suppose the Council of West Ham knew the work would be conducted at some economical loss; how was it they did not point that out to the deputation ?—I cannot say.

1523. With regard to the census that was conducted by the labour organizations, do you know anything about that census ?—No, except that I was given to understand that it was a house to house visitation; but, as I said before, Mr. Councillor Alden knows all about that.

1524. Were not the people who conducted that census those who had been previously going about to meetings and very strongly representing the amount of distress that existed in West Ham? —I do not know as a matter of fact.

1525. Was not that census to a certain extent conducted by those persons who had made very strong statements about the extent of the distress ?—I really do not know how it was done, except that I believe it was done under the auspices of the trades unions.

1526. How many trades unions are there in West Ham ?—Eight or ten, I should think.

1527. Have you any idea as to the number of the committee of those unions ?—No.

1528. Have you any idea as to the number of persons who took part in this census ?—No.

1529. Has any action been taken by the Council consequent on this census; have they acted upon it in any way ?—No.

1530. With regard to this Petition that the Council of West Ham has presented to the House of Commons, how did the Petition originate ?—The Mayor moved it from the chair on this day fortnight.

1531. Who prepared the Petition ?—I did.

1532. Did it go to a Committee of the Borough Corporation ?—No; the Mayor read it through and signed it.

1533. You drafted it ?—Yes.

1534. May I ask, on what information did you rely in drafting the Petition, because you make some very definite statements there ?—Only what I gathered at the sittings of the Council from time to time, and so forth.

1535. There was no discussion specifically as to the Petition ?—No.

1536. You prepared it, and the Mayor signed it by order of the Council ?—That is so.

1537. Was it submitted to the Council ?—No.

1538. It was never submitted to the Council ? —No.

1539. But I suppose you had an order of the Council to put the Borough Seal on ?—Certainly.

1540. It was never read over to the Council ? —No.

1541. It was prepared by you on the instructions of the Mayor, submitted to him, and then sealed in Council without being read over; is that it ?—That is it.

1542. You say that if the Council are to have the duty of mitigating distress from want of employment, they should have a staff and the money. They have no money. Does it at all occur to you that there should be a special staff to deal with distress arising from want of employment attached to your municipality ?—No, I do not say that at all. I do not suggest that the municipality should have anything to do with the unemployed; on the contrary, I do not think they ought to.

Chairman.

1543. You think it should be left to the guardians ?—I think it should be left to the guardians, unless Parliament devised some other means of dealing with it.

Mr. *Bolton.*

1544. If it is left to the guardians, then how are you to deal with that class of persons who object to be pauperised, and who yet want relief, that is to say, persons who are willing to work but are unwilling to submit to the conditions attached to relief by the guardians ? —That is the problem. It is almost insolvable, as it appears to me. If a man says I want work, and I will not take relief, and the law says you shall not have it unless you do take relief, you get to cross purposes and get into a corner at once.

1545. If Parliament is to lay down the conditions on which the distress arising from want of employment is to be dealt with, and to entrust the executive work to municipalities like yours, you will want a staff of people to deal with it ?—You mean supposing it is left to the Town Council ?

1546. Yes.—Certainly we should.

1547. I understood you to say that you and your municipality were prepared to deal with the matter if Parliament threw the work upon you ?—All I say is this: that if Parliament in its wisdom thought proper to put it upon the municipality they would loyally give effect to it to the best of their ability.

1548. Have you at all considered how the municipality is to carry out work of this kind, what trades or occupations they are to embark upon, and what work they are to set the people to do ?—I do not think they ought to have anything to do with it at all. I do not think it is part of their duty to touch it.

1549. Then I do not follow your answer, to the effect that you were quite willing to undertake the work if Parliament would hand it over to you; for that is what it amounted to, as I understood ?—I do not put it in that way at all. The Council say, We are being pestered to give work which we have not got to give, and we really have nothing whatever to do with it. Let Parliament say whether we are or are not to undertake it. As it is, we have no machinery to work it, and we have no funds out of which we can legally pay for it, and yet we try to do it. We are in a false position.

1550. But that answer does to a certain extent imply that there is an idea in your mind, or in the mind of your municipality, that it would be practicable for you to do something if Parliament entrusted this duty to you ?—It would be practicable, of course. They can do anything that is put upon them to do, but that is another

Mr. *Bolton*—continued.

another thing from its being desirable. I do not think they want it put upon them at all.

1551. Then as to the money; do you think that it is possible by any local fund to raise money to embark on these large works for the employment of the unemployed?—It all depends upon the situation in the Union.

1552. How many people a year are summoned for rates in your borough?—I cannot answer that question; I will get you the information.

1553. It would be a very great many, I suppose?—I do not think so many as you would fancy.

1554. In West Ham are there any very large numbers of persons summoned for the non-payment of rates?—I should say, speaking off-hand, not so very many.

1555. Does compounding largely prevail there?—Compounding prevails on the Poor-law side, but on the Council side it does not.

1556. You suggested a little while ago the employment of pauper labour in reclaiming land, and you referred to such a large work as reclaiming the Wash?—Yes.

1557. Have you thought about that at all?—I have only thought about it generally from having heard people speak about it.

1558. Do you think it is practicable to do work of that kind to any very large extent with pauper labour?—It would not be pauper labour. The people we are dealing with are outside the general pauper.

1559. Comparatively few of them in number would be able, would they, to be sent down and set to work on such a work as that?—I do not know. Taking them all over the country, I should think there would be a good many thousands.

1560. Does your Corporation apportion the work in any way, so that work that can be done in the winter time is kept over to the winter time to be done?—No, I do not think there has been any organised arrangement of that sort.

1561. Would it not be better for the Corporation to have a sort of budget, if I may use such a term, for the year, and appropriate a certain portion of their rates to work in the winter time, to be done by persons who would be out of employment?—You will remember the borough engineer says it is not fit to do these works in the winter time.

1562. There are other parishes in London who do spread their expenditure over the year, so as to appropriate a particular expenditure to particular works which they look out beforehand for the winter, and which can be done during the winter?—Yes, that might be done.

1563. Do you not think it is essential that it should be done?—At this particular time we have any amount of work to do in West Ham, whether by accident or design I do not know.

1564. Then I suppose you will take in hand this large quantity of work directly the severe weather is over?—Certainly.

1565. Then you will absorb at West Ham all the unemployed, will you not?—No, not nearly all, only a comparatively small percentage of them. Then the building trades, I believe, are starting again, and they would absorb some more,

Mr. *Bolton*—continued.

and there would be more work in the docks now that the ice is melting, so that there will, no doubt, be a very considerable diminution in the number of the unemployed in a short time, unless the weather becomes severe again.

1566. If there is such a large amount of public work that has to be done, and if the public work is sufficient to give employment for the unemployed, how is it that, taking your large amount of work in conjunction with the increased work in various trades, there will not be sufficient work to absorb the unemployed in West Ham?—There may be; I do not know.

1567. Do not you think that the whole difficulty, so far as West Ham is concerned, will largely solve itself after the effects of the late severe weather have worn off?—I think so.

1568. Then you do not think that there is any necessity for any special or exceptional treatment of the unemployed question in West Ham?—I think it will come down to its normal state, of course.

1569. And you think that the constituted authorities of the West Ham Municipality and the Poor-law are quite able to deal with the present difficulty, but for the sentimental objection that certain people have to take relief from the Poor-law and other authorities of West Ham?—I say the Board of Guardians can deal with any case of distress of any sort; they have got the power and the machinery to do it.

1570. You rather complain of the action of the Local Government Board in issuing the Circular which has brought down upon you the unemployed?—Yes. This is the paragraph in the Circular that they complain of: "The Board recommend that there should be co-operation between Town Councils and Boards of Guardians, and that arrangements should be made as far as practicable for the employment in connection with the works of those who are recommended by the Guardians as persons who, owing to their previous conditions and circumstances, it is desirable should not become subjects of Poor-law relief." The Town Council say upon that the unemployed have got it into their mind that they are the proper people to find employment, and they are demanding employment from them. We therefore say to the Government, "Solve it for us, please."

1571. You say that that Circular of the Local Government Board has brought down these people upon you clamouring for relief, when but for that Circular they would have probably exerted themselves and obtained work?—That I cannot tell; they might have done so.

1572. You think the Circular has done, so far as you are concerned, more harm than good?—I think the clause I read in the Circular has created a misapprehension in the minds of the unemployed and their leaders.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

1573. Will you kindly tell the Committee how it is that the district of West Ham differs so largely from its next-door neighbour, which is equally large, Bow and Bromley?—Does it differ in this point of view, sir?

1574. It differs, inasmuch as there is no intermediate demand in Bow and Bromley for the

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

unemployed, such as you have at West Ham?—I do not know about Bow and Bromley; but I have heard that Poplar (that joins us across the river) is in pretty much the same sort of state; they are besieging the Poplar Board of Guardians for employment in the same way that they are West Ham.

1575. Are you aware that the Board of Guardians sent a reply to the Circular of Sir Hugh Owen, stating that the poverty in Poplar was less this year than last?—No, I did not know that; I only heard this this morning. I cannot vouch for it.

1576. Now, will you tell the Committee whether you consider the census taken at West Ham of the unemployed is a reliable census?—Well, I have not any knowledge of it, one way or the other, sir. Yes, I believe it is to a large extent reliable.

1577. Was it taken under the auspices of any of the parochial officers?—I do not think so; no, it was not.

1578. Was it compiled by any political organisations?—I think it was compiled, or carried out, under the auspices of some of the trades unions.

1579. An independent labour, did I understand you to say?—No; I said the trades unions.

1580. And not by any political association?—Not that I know of. Mr. Councillor Alden has verified part of it, he tells me.

1581. He has verified part of it himself?—Yes.

1582. When you sent out the circular for your Petition?—Yes.

1583. You just now stated to the Committee that that Petition was not submitted for approval to any member of the Council?—No; I did not say it was submitted to the Council; I said it was submitted to the Mayor.

1584. Only to the Mayor?—Yes.

1585. Did you subsequently send the Petition to every member of the Council?—No.

1586. You did not?—No.

1587. So that up to now there is no member of the Council who has seen the Petition?—Some of them have seen it.

1588. Only some of them, in a casual way?—Yes; I shall send it out to them.

1589. You have not sent one to each member of the Council yet?—No.

1590. And they have merely seen the Petition in a casual manner?—That is so.

1591. And you do not know whether it has met with their approval?—I am sure it has met with their approval.

1592. You are quite sure?—Yes; I had not time to submit it to the Council. The direction of the Council was to prepare and send forthwith a Petition; and I did so with the approval of the Mayor; and he has signed the Petition.

1593. But you have had no objections from any members of the Council?—No. I have had one letter from one of the Council asking why the Petition was sent, as he did not know that it was passed. I wrote a letter in reply to that.

1594. Have you had no other letter?—No other letter.

1595. You are quite sure that is the only letter you have received from members of the Council, who were very much astonished to find that the Petition had been sent out without their sanction?—Yes, certainly.

1596. Now do you know anything about the decaying trades or industries in West Ham?—There are some; the sugar trade is one.

1597. Sugar; what else; shipbuilding?—Yes, shipbuilding, until recently.

1598. Do you know the cause of the decaying of the shipbuilding trade in West Ham?—No; I cannot say I do.

1599. Do you know that the Hill's Shipbuilding Company did receive an order for a line of battleship?—Yes; I heard that they had one from the Japanese Government.

1600. Do you know that they received an order from the English Government for a line of battleship, as well as one from the Japanese Government?—No; I had not heard that.

1601. You did not know that?—I do not know that.

1602. You do not know that when they received the specifications of that order they found inserted in those specifications a clause by which they could not submit their tender unless they conformed to the union rate of wages?—No, I did not know that.

1603. You do not know that?—No.

1604. Will you tell the Committee whether the cost of living to the artisan in West Ham is not as low, if not lower, than in any other place in the United Kingdom?—I cannot say that, but I should think it is pretty low.

1605. It is low?—I should say so.

1606. Will you please tell the Committee how it is that the union rate of wages averages 2*d.* more in West Ham than it does on the Clyde?—No, I cannot.

1607. Now I come to the rates of West Ham. You told the Committee just now that they were 8*s.* in the £?—Roughly, yes.

1608. Do you know the rates at Bow and Bromley?—No; I think they are about the same at Bow; I am speaking from memory.

1609. Are you sure they are more than 7*s.* in the £ at Bow?—No, I am not.

1610. The same with regard to the School Board rate—you say 2*s.* 2*d.*?—I believe it is 2*s.* 1*d.* exactly—I said over 2*s.* 2*s.* 3*d.* I did mention first, but I believe it is 2*s.* 1*d.*

1611. Then you correct that statement?—Yes, please.

1612. You have told the Committee that you have plenty of work to do now that the frost has gone, and sufficient to supply the unemployed who are seeking for employment?—No, Sir—*some* of the unemployed who are seeking for employment.

1613. Then what portion of the unemployed is it that you have got work for?—Well, of course, I cannot tell; "some considerable number," I said, I believe.

1614. How many?—I cannot tell you. Mr. Angell would probably give you that information better.

1615. Then you told the Committee that the indoor relief amounted to 22,000*l.*, and the outdoor relief to 33,000*l.*?—Yes.

1616. Is that your normal state of things?—I should think so, corrected by population, about the same.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

1617. Can you tell the Committee whether, if you had been included in the metropolitan area in the equalisation of rates, this unemployed question would ever have arisen?—I cannot say at all.

1618. What would have been your proportion?—We should have saved something.

1619. As much as 30,000*l.*?—No, I do not think so.

1620. But surely there is no difference between West Ham and Camberwell?—Well, I cannot tell you, sir, what we should have done if we had gone into the Metropolis.

1621. When do you propose to put the men on to this work that you have in hand?—Immediately the weather breaks sufficiently to enable us to start.

1622. Is not the weather sufficiently genial for the work to be started at once?—Yes; I understood that the borough engineer was going to start some of the works this morning.

1623. You understood that the borough engineer was going to start the works this morning?—Some of them.

1624. Then how many men would be put on to-day?—That I do not know.

1625. Do you think half the unemployed?—Oh, no.

1626. And is it right, to your mind, that the term "unemployed" should be applied to men who receive as much as 10*s.* a week from the trades union they belong to?—I should think not.

1627. But you do give employment to these men, do you not?—I dare say we do.

1628. Do you make any distinction?—The qualification is six months' residence in the borough; they apply for work, and they get it in turns.

1629. You make no enquiries as to whether they are in receipt of money from the trades unions?—I do not think that question is put.

1630. So that a man may really be in receipt of 10*s.* a week and yet come under the category of "unemployed"?—As far as I know; of course, it does not come within my ken.

1631. Surely the ratepayers of West Ham would like to know those who are utterly destitute and those who are in receipt of 10*s.* a week from the trades unions?—Yes.

1632. But you make no distinction?—As far as I know; I never heard that the question has been put.

1633. Do you think that the distinction should be made?—Yes.

1634. You think it should?—I do.

1635. And you do not think that a man receiving 10*s.* a week from a trades union should have the facilities of obtaining work at 6*d.* an hour the same as a man who is receiving no money from a trades union?—Not the same facilities, no. I think both cases ought to be taken into consideration, but the preference given to the man who gets nothing.

1636. Can you tell me what the men did who received 4*d.* an hour for work which was given to them by Mr. Hill?—No, I cannot.

Mr. *John Burns.*

1637. They levelled cricket pitches, did not they, on Wanstead Flats?—Yes.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

1638. How many men were employed?—I cannot tell you the statistics.

1639. And has the money been spent, is it all gone?—This season, do you mean?

1640. Yes.—No, I do not know anything about it this season. No, it has not all gone, I am sure of that; they are still carrying on operations, I believe.

1641. Now, do you think that the present vigorous conditions as to the relief of able-bodied persons should be relaxed?—On exceptional occasions?

1642. On exceptional occasions?—Yes.

1643. Do you think that a wider body than any single Board of Guardians is necessary if the question of providing work be entered on?—Yes, I think it is.

1644. You do not think the Board of Guardians have sufficient power?—Hardly; no, not to deal with employment.

1645. Now, with regard to the money which it has been suggested should be devoted without delay to the relief of these poor people in West Ham; have you any proposition to make to the Committee as to the way in which that money should be devoted, and when it should be devoted?—Well, I think that in severe weather the money ought to be given to the people without any work at all, because there is no satisfactory work to do.

1646. We have been sitting nearly a week; what have the unemployed been doing during that time?—There have been several Charity Organizations afloat, and they have been going to the stone-yard, as the statistics show.

1647. Have they had food every day since the Committee has been sitting?—I cannot possibly answer that question.

1648. And is it not your opinion that if anything is done it should be done immediately?—Certainly.

1649. Or do you think the need is passing away?—I think it is passing away now; but I think now is the time to deal with the question, so that we may know what to do next year.

1650. Then you think it is likely to crop up again?—I do. It certainly will crop up if this trying weather comes again.

1651. If we get such trying weather as we have recently passed through?—Certainly.

1652. It depends totally on the weather?—To a large extent on the weather, I believe.

1653. With regard to these colonization colonies, how many do you think out of the unemployed in West Ham would be suitable to be employed upon them, what proportion?—I should think, perhaps 300 or 400—not that number in the ordinary times, you know, but really 300 or 400.

1654. Do you approve of that system of the colonization experiment?—Yes. I think it is a very good thing, as far as it goes.

1655. You think that parts of Essex now out of cultivation could be profitably employed by putting the unemployed on the land to till it?—No, I do not say "profitably."

1656. What percentage do you say of the unemployed would be suitable to go on that work?—I should think probably 25 per cent., or something like that.

1657. Twenty-five per cent.?—I should think so.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

1658. Then you calculate that 25 per cent. of the unemployed are agricultural labourers?—No, they are men who would be able to perform that work.

1659. Reliable men?—More or less.

1660. Now, with regard to qualification, do you think that when a man is destitute and hungry, and his wife and children are clamouring for food, he gives one moments' attention to the question of whether he disqualifies himself for a vote or not?—No; I know he will sell his last stick rather than apply for relief.

1661. Is that owing to a personal feeling, or a feeling with regard to the vote?—I should think it is both.

Mr. *John Burns.*

1662. Does it not rather depend upon the person he is going to vote for?—I do not know.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

1663. Possibly there is more enthusiasm in Battersea than in West Ham in that respect; but what I want to arrive at is this, whether the vote has the smallest weight in the matter at all?—I think it has considerable.

Mr. *David Rundell.*

1664. You spoke just now of lack of funds in cases of exceptional distress. Would it be an inducement or an encouragement to local authorities to undertake useful works and works of improvement if they could obtain Imperial loans at a low rate of interest?—Well, as far as that is concerned, we get our money on pretty reasonable terms as it is; our Three per cent. Stock fetches about one hundred and five at present, I think, or something like that; at any rate, we can borrow at less than 3 per cent., so that there is no difficulty whatever about the money.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

1665. You have said, in the course of your evidence, that when the winter (at least, this was the gist of it) had passed away the condition of West Ham would become normal?—Yes.

1666. Now would it be safe to say that the normal condition of West Ham is to have a surplus supply of labour—a larger supply of labour than can be kept constantly employed?—In the winter, certainly.

1667. And in summer?—I should hardly think so in summer. I think in the summer it would reduce its pauperism pure and simple.

1668. The unemployed have been making considerable noise and clamour for relief; may I ask you whether the relief they have demanded has been in the form of relief from the rates or of work?—They demand work in exchange for pay, as contradistinguished from relief—as against chance work.

1669. They are much opposed to the stone-yard, are they not?—They are very much opposed to the stone-yard.

1670. May I also ask you, as the result of your experience as clerk to the guardians, whether you would make a wide distinction between a person out of employment, and really desiring work, and, say, the ordinary loafer, or criminal, who makes application for relief?—Oh, I think there ought to be a classification on that head, decidedly.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie*—continued.

1671. The complaint in your Petition is that the unemployed believe that either the guardians or the Corporation, or a combination of the two, have the duty imposed upon them of finding work, and there is no such statutory duty?—That is so.

1672. And you would consider it an improvement, I presume, that there should be imposed upon some responsible local authority the duty of dealing with this question by statutory powers?—There should be imposed upon some authority that duty; it should be stated distinctly who it is who should deal with this very involved question, and very serious question.

1673. Do you endorse the opinion contained in the Petition, that the State ought to devise a scheme, leaving the administration only to local authorities?—I think Parliament should decide once for all how it is to be dealt with, and either do it themselves or put it on local authorities, and such authorities as they think well, to deal with it.

1674. Now, in spite of all that can be done either by the Corporation or any improvement which there may be (say) in the building trade, would it be your opinion that there would still remain a considerable residuum of distress outside the ordinary pauper class in West Ham?—I do not think there will be very many unemployed when the weather opens thoroughly and trade is in full swing again.

Mr. *Bartley.*

1675. You do not think so?—No, I do not think so.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

1676. This is a question, perhaps, more for Mr. Hill, but it bears upon the point I am dealing with. Do you know whether the Thames Iron Works is employing many men at present?—Yes, I believe they are; I have just heard from one of the Committee that there are two ships they have in hand, one for the English Government and one for the Japanese.

1677. Will not that absorb a considerable number of the unemployed?—That will help very materially.

Mr. *John Burns.*

1678. And Barking Road Bridge?—And Barking Road Bridge.

1679. And Blackwall Tunnel?—Yes.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

1680. Of course, these have been in hand for some time; but you do not think there will be any exceptional distress, say, after the present week?—No, I do not know that I would say that; that is too short a time. I should think about the latter end of next month, or more likely between three weeks and a month.

1681. Between now and then, would it be advantageous to the Unemployed Committee which

Mr. *Keir-Hardie*—continued.

which is in existence, to have funds at their disposal to meet the distress which will exist between now and the end of March?—I venture to think that the season is almost gone too far now. Of course, it would be an advantage to get a contribution, but what is really, as I said before, urgently needed is that the question should be settled; I mean, we could pull through this year and have it settled by the next season, if possible.

1682. So you think it would not be advisable to have any grant at present?—I do not go so far as that; I admit that a grant in aid would be very nice.

1683. But you do not regard it as necessary?—I do not think it is absolutely necessary at this particular moment.

Mr. *Bartley.*

1684. You do not think it is necessary?—I do not.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

1685. Has any work been done in your labour-yard except stone-breaking?—Oakum-picking and wood-chopping.

1686. Oakum-picking, and wood-chopping, and stone-breaking?—That is so.

1687. Those three?—Those three.

1688. Then I suppose, considering the large number of men who have been employed in the yard, you have got a large accumulation of product, of stones broken?—Yes.

1689. A very large accumulation?—Yes, that is so.

1690. Bearing that in mind, may I remind you that you have said that the guardians would be fully able to deal with the distress apart from pauperising the recipients of relief. Do you contemplate, in giving that answer, any kind of work except the three kinds you have just mentioned—oakum-picking, wood-chopping, and stone-breaking?—I think by the words "apart from" I meant the word "except."

1691. At all events, you said the guardians were fully able to deal with the distress. Am I correctly representing you there?—Yes; I think the word should be "except," instead of "apart from."

1692. And to deal with the distress by giving more wood-chopping, more stone-breaking, and more oakum-picking, and in no other way?—That is so. I mean unless it became necessary.

1693. That is what you mean by being "fully able to deal with the distress"?—Yes.

1694. Then you told us that the President of the Local Government Board said he would dispense with the labour test under certain conditions, which I did not quite follow. Would you be kind enough to repeat that?—Certainly. What I said was this: If the guardians agreed with any urban authority in the union for the latter to employ a given number of the unemployed for a week, the guardians would relieve that same number during the next week without giving them any labour test.

1695. Then the effect would be this: that the men would be employed by the urban authority one week, and receive wages; the next week they would be idle, and receive relief from the guardians?—That is so.

Mr. *Pickersgill*—continued.

1696. Then I understood you to object to the issue of this Circular by the Local Government Board, or to rather resent the issue of that Circular. I do not want you to go into a lengthy answer; but you objected to the issue of the Circular; you seemed to regard it rather as unfair to you, by putting a burden upon you which you were not able to discharge?—I do not know that I meant "unfair." Well, perhaps, "unfair" is the expression, although I am sure they did not mean it in that way, but they seemed to be putting upon us something that we had no means of giving effect to; and that is the short and the long of it.

1697. Amongst other things, I think you said that if you were expected to act upon it you ought to be given powers to get an inquiry staff together?—Yes.

1698. What was the nature of the inquiries that you contemplated to be made by that staff—the kind of inquiry?—Similar to the relieving officers in the union.

1699. Exactly; the guardians have such a staff as you contemplated who are able to make inquiries?—Certainly.

1700. Then would you be willing to accede to, or how would you regard a proposal of this kind, that an agreement should be made between the guardians and the Corporation, the Corporation agreeing to employ a certain number of persons on the recommendation of the guardians, and the guardians upon their side agreeing to pay a certain proportion of the wages of those people. Do you follow me?—I quite see what you mean. You mean to promote legislation with that object. We have not power to do it now.

1701. I do not suggest that you have; I rather wish your opinion, if you have no objection to give it; if it were possible by legislation or otherwise, how would the Corporation feel toward such a proposal?—I do not think it would work.

1702. May I ask why you do not think it would work?—Well, in the first place it would be a sort of *quasi* pauperism, and I look upon the Corporation as pure and simple tradesmen—I mean the Corporation has got to go to the best market, do the work in the best possible way, and for the least possible money, as quickly as possible, and get rid of it.

1703. Would not the contribution made by the guardians rather go to make up the deficit to the Corporation?—Yes; but even then you would get unskilled workmen.

1704. For some of your works you require unskilled labour, do you not?—Yes, for some of them.

1705. You can employ a certain amount of unskilled labour?—Oh, yes, a certain amount; but I do not think that the Corporation ought to be saddled with them in any shape or form, myself; I think it is quite beyond the scope of their duties.

1706. Very well; I will take that answer. I wanted to have asked you some questions about this experiment of sending men to the Southend farm,

Mr. *Pickersgill*—continued.

farm, but I understand you are going to give us a statement of the facts of that case?—Yes, certainly.

1707. In making that statement, would you mind giving attention to these points which, I think, have not been mentioned: First, upon what principle, if any, were the 27 persons sent selected; whether the question of their being single or married was taken into consideration?—They were single; I can answer that.

1708. Very well; they were single?—Yes.

1709. And the last point would be this: Are you able to say whether any of the 27 have come back upon your hands?—I will give that information.

Mr. *Logan.*

1710. I understood you to say just now that in your opinion there would be no great amount of distress in West Ham after the end of March?—Yes, it would become normal by that time.

1711. Have you any figures showing the number of persons relieved in, say, the months of October and November, that is to say, two months preceding the two months which you have given, or any figures with you showing the number of persons relieved for March and April, that is, two months after the two months you have given?—No, I have no figures here, but I can send them at the same time to the Committee.

Chairman.

1712. You can add the figures; they may be inserted as your answer to that question when you get the proof of your evidence?—I will add them.

Mr. *Logan.*

1713. In the figures you gave I find there are about 9,700 persons—or cases—(I do not quite know which it is) relieved per week during December, 1893, and January, 1894; about 9,400 per week in December, 1894, and January, 1895. Can you tell the Committee approximately what proportion of those persons relieved would be permanent paupers?—Yes, I could find that out.

1714. My point is this: It seems to me, from the figures you have given, that there are a number of people permanently out of work in West Ham; is that so?—Yes, that is so.

1715. Can you give the Committee any idea as to what trades those people who are permanently out of employ belong, roughly—half a dozen trades, say?—I should think they are principally general labourers; I do not think there would be many artisans amongst them.

1716. Would there be any bricklayers?—I should think very few indeed.

1717. Masons?—I should not think there would be any of those.

1718. Carpenters?—No; I should think they would be mostly the general labouring class.

1719. Under the term "general labourer" what is included? I understand that a bricklayer's labourer is a general labourer?—Yes, I should take him as such.

1720. Do you say that bricklayers' labourers who live at West Ham are out of work?—No, I do not say so; I say there are a certain number.

Mr. *Logan*—continued.

That is to say, as long as our stone-yard is open there are people to come into it; that is the only gauge I have got. When that stone-yard is not open I do not know what they do.

1721. Then you are not of opinion that in West Ham there are any number of skilled workmen permanently out of employ?—No considerable number permanently out of employ.

1722. Not even in connection with the building trade, such as bricklayers, masons, carpenters, slaters, and plasterers?—No, I should not think so.

1723. You said if it were not for the fact of relief carrying with it disfranchisement the guardians would have no difficulty in dealing with this question of the unemployed. Did you mean to say they would have no difficulty in preventing those unemployed from being in want, or did you mean to say that if it were not for this difficulty of the disfranchisement the guardians would be able to find work for them?—Oh, no; I meant that if the people did not object to come to the guardians there would be no difficulty on the part of the guardians in dealing with every case in the Union.

1724. That is to say, in preventing hardship, or in preventing them from starving?—Yes, certainly.

1725. Then I understand you to say that you think that this permanently dealing with this question of the unemployed is not a matter for the guardians, or for the municipality, but more particularly for the State?—Yes.

1726. And you are not in favour of the municipality being asked to find work for these men?—I am not; no.

1727. You recognise the difficulty there would be in finding work during the winter months for men who are thrown out of work through stress of weather?—Yes; it has been practically impossible to do any work at this time.

1728. Still, I gather from you that although you foresee all the difficulties in connection with any aid by Parliament, even, that is to say, to the extent of calling upon local authorities to find work, you think it is preferable for the State to endeavour to solve these difficulties than to allow things to go on as they have been going in West Ham lately?—Certainly.

Mr. *Billson.*

1729. I take it that the details are to be left, you think, to the local authority; all you want the State to do is to lay down the new principle?—I think that would be satisfactory. If the State would say, "For the future this has to be done," I think everybody would acquiesce at once. We should all say, "Very well; this is what we have to do; this is all we can do; we cannot do anything more, and we will do this."

1730. It can be done through the local bodies?—Oh, certainly.

Mr. *John Burns.*

1731. In answer to Mr. Jackson, you said that the unemployed problem in West Ham had become chronic. To what extent has the unemployed problem become chronic?—That was Mr. Angell's expression, I think

1732. Yes

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

1732. Yes, but you endorsed it, I think?—Well, what he meant, I think, and what I mean is, that it is recurring rather than chronic; I mean to say from year to year the same question arises.

1733. That is very important; but may I ask you at length on this: Do you mean by "chronic," or does Mr. Angell mean by "chronic," that regularly every year between November and the beginning of March you have a certain number of men in West Ham always compelled to look forward to being out of work; do you mean that?—That is precisely what I do mean, sir.

1734. Then I am to gather from you that regularly in the winter months there is an unemployed contingent at West Ham?—That is so.

1735. Now, will you follow me from March to October? What is the number of unemployed in West Ham roughly between March and October?—Well, I am afraid I cannot answer that; I will send you an answer to it.

1736. We will leave that point, if you cannot give an answer now. You said that, considering how far we had gone into the spring, you thought that with an effort you would be able to pull through this winter?—Oh, yes.

1737. You think so?—I do think so.

1738. You think that, what with the relaxation of out-door relief, private charity, Mr. Hill's relief works, and other eleemosynary aids, you will be able to pull through without exceptional loans or exceptional grants, that is, unless the frost comes back?—Yes, I think so.

1739. You told us that certain of the unemployed were employed at West Ham, both in the relief works, by Mr. Hill's Committee, and, when the snow fell, by the surveyor on four days a week—six hours a day, at 6*d.* per hour; is that so?—I believe those are the figures.

1740. Now what steps has Mr. Hill's Committee or the guardians, or the Local Authority, taken to prevent this condition of things happening. Supposing you were a stevedore, and I a docker, and you and I had worked two days and one night in unloading a ship with refrigerated mutton from Australia, that we had had six hours of sleep, and that we were determined—having put in two days and one night at our work, and earned, say, from 15*s.* to 18*s.*—to do four days at 6*d.* an hour for the rest of the week. What steps have you taken to prevent that kind of thing happening?—I do not think I have done anything at all.

1741. You have done nothing to prevent that kind of thing?—No.

1742. Would you be surprised to hear that at Limehouse, Poplar, and Millwall, where similar work has been undertaken—that kind of thing has been going on?—I do not know it.

1743. Would not you have more money to give to the absolutely destitute, and those who had no work at all, if greater discrimination were shown in the way I have suggested?—Yes, I suppose so.

1744. You think you would?—Yes; but what powers should we have, as a Corporation or a Board of Guardians, to do anything in that way?

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

1745. You do not mean to say that at West Ham you allow your relieving officers to give outdoor relief, or to give tickets for the stone-yard, or to give medical relief, unless the applicant is first examined, and then produces a residential qualification and proof of lack of means, do you?—Oh, they investigate each case, of course.

1746. But what steps do they take to prevent a man working two days in the docks, and one night, and then going into the stone-yard or on the relief works? Do you know of any?—No, I do not.

1747. Now I will come to another point. You have large sugar works at West Ham, have not you?—Yes.

1748. Are they employing more or less labour than they did two or three years ago, to your knowledge—I do not pin you to minute detail?—I should say they are doing more business.

1749. They are employing more men?—I should say so.

1750. Do you know whether the bulk of the men employed in those sugar works are native or foreign workmen?—No, I do not.

1751. You do not know, do you, that the proportion of foreign labour has considerably increased?—No, I do not know that fact.

1752. Have you heard that a considerable number of men in the sugar works, the chemical works, and other works have recently been displaced by the introduction of wages-saving machinery?—Yes, I have heard that complained of; wages-saving machinery has been introduced in various places.

1753. Are there more men employed at the gasworks now than there were 12 months ago, do you know?—I should think a few more, as the undertaking increases in size.

1754. Did not the introduction of the three-shift system in the Beckton Gasworks considerably relieve your surplus labour during the year?—Yes, I believe that too had a considerable effect.

1755. And there is a considerable number of men employed now on the Barking Road Bridge, is not there?—That is on the London side; we are coming down.

1756. But it is so?—Yes, it is so.

1757. Now with regard to the docks, do you know as a Poor-law clerk whether there are more or less men employed in the docks now than there were two years ago?—No, I cannot say.

1758. You do not know?—I do not know.

1759. Have you evidence as to the effects of making permanent the labour in the docks upon the number of unemployed who are dependent upon West Ham?—No, I have no statistics as to that.

1760. It has not been suggested to you, has it, that the amount of shipping coming into London, and at West Ham, has been reduced during the past year or two?—Oh, yes.

1761. It has?—Yes.

1762. May I ask who suggested that?—The Dock Company.

1763. May I ask you this question: Is it not a fact that according to the annual calendar of the London and India Docks Joint Committee,

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

a director's pocket book which I have in my hand, the tonnage coming into London was 2,838,981 tons in 1889, and that it has gradually grown from that 2,838,000 tons to 3,454,000 tons in 1892?—No, I have seen those figures.

1764. Well, that rather officially corrects the suggestion that tonnage has dropped off, does it not; and the increase has been progressive through 1893 and 1894?—Yes.

1765. You have had a number of new industries started recently in West Ham, have not you, new chemical works?—Yes, there are some new chemical works.

1766. May I put this to you: Do you consider that the making regular and permanent the labour in the dock has accentuated your difficulty with the unemployed problem there. Have you had evidence of that?—No.

1767. Have not the building trades in West Ham, through the abolition of overtime and the adoption of shorter hours, extended the working period in the year, and spread employment over a wider number?—That must necessarily be so.

1768. You believe that to be the case?—Certainly.

1769. Have you taken a census of the relief agencies, public, private, and associated, in your district?—No, I have not.

1770. Do the Charity Organization Society attend the meetings of your Poor-law guardians?—No.

1771. Do the Poor-law guardians ever consult or co-operate with the trades unions and the friendly societies in exceptional distress?—No.

1772. Are you cognizant of the experiment for the unemployed that was carried out at Abbey Mills Station two years ago?—There was some scheme on at that time, I remember.

1773. Do you know the number of men who were employed there?—No; I could let you have it.

1774. I know the number. Do not you know there were nearly 400 men employed there?—No; I take it from you that it was so.

1775. And you did not visit the experiment at Abbey Mills?—No.

1776. Have you visited the relief works in operation on Wanstead Flats?—Yes.

1777. What is the number of men employed there?—This year, do you mean?

1778. Yes?—I have not been this year.

1779. Have the guardians considered, as apart from relieving distress either through an Imperial grant or through local rates, any scheme of labour colonies, home colonisation, emigration, or the payment of men's expenses to districts where work is more probable than at West Ham?—They have dealt with emigration to an extent.

1780. To what extent?—Not very largely, but to an extent.

1781. Could you let us know the number of men?—Yes.

1782. To what extent have they dealt with the question of home colonisation?—They have not touched it at all.

1783. To what extent have they dealt with the labour colony?—They have not touched that at all, excepting as I have before mentioned.

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

1784. What has the Town Council (to which you are also clerk) done with regard to the alternation of public work to private depression; have they done anything at all?—I do not quite follow that question.

1785. Let me put it in this way: Suppose trade from April to September was very brisk in West Ham, and that suddenly the Council had to construct a new sewer, or build an embankment, or undertake the clearing of some ditches which you have in that neighbourhood, has the surveyor ever reported to the Town Council that, in so far as was practicable and consistent with general economy, that class of work should be allocated to the depressed times of the year?—No, I do not think he has.

1786. You have not considered such a scheme?—No.

1787. You say that, broadly speaking, your district consists of general labourers, artisans, shop-keepers, and others?—Yes.

1788. Mostly of the lower, middle, the working, and the unskilled labouring class?—That is so.

1789. You told us that from that district you had to extract a very high rate, that is, as compared with, say, my own district, in which the rate is 6*s.* 4*d.*?—Yes, quite so.

1790. You told us also that the portion of your rate which is spent in Poor-law is not above, is, in fact, below, the average of 1*s.* 4*d.* for the rest of the Metropolis; is not that so?—Yes, that is so.

1791. Now I would like to ask you here on this: Have you applied to the Education Department for a relaxation of the financial conditions that have compelled West Ham to have the highest School Board rate that there is in Great Britain and Ireland?—I have not heard that they have done so.

1792. Do you know whether they have done so?—I do not know whether they have, but I think I should have known if they had.

1793. Of course, as clerk to the School Board you would?—No, I am not clerk to the School Board.

1794. As clerk to the Town Council, which manages the School Board you would?—No, it does not manage the School Board.

1795. Is it utterly independent?—It is separate altogether.

1796. Is outdoor relief freely and lightly given in West Ham?—I should say it was.

1797. You would say that it was?—Yes, freely given.

1798. It is freely given?—Yes.

1799. To what extent does the free disbursement of outdoor relief account for and accentuate your temporary and your chronic unemployed problem?—I do not think it touches us from the guardians point of view at all.

1800. You do not think it touches you?—No.

1801. You think the residential qualification relieves you from that, do you?—I mean to say this: As I said before, the Guardians have no difficulty in dealing with all the cases that come before them.

1802. Have you many casuals applying and receiving relief at West Ham?—There are a good few casuals.

1803. What

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

1803. What do you call a "good few"; how many per day?—I should think perhaps 20 to 30. I do not know that it is as much as that though now; 15 I should think is more like the number.

1804. Now as apart from casuals and non-resident recipients of out-door relief, have you many vagrants and tramps that make West Ham their rendezvous?—No, I do not think there are many.

1805. How do these casuals define themselves when they are registered coming in—in the register?—There is a book kept in which they are entered.

1806. Is there, when trade is depressed in West Ham, many evidences of the influx from rural districts?—No; I do not think there is.

1807. No evidence?—Not much evidence.

1808. No evidence from rural districts?—No, not from the rural districts.

1809. Then what is the cause, apart from the weather, of the statement which has been made that West Ham has a larger number of unemployed than many other metropolitan districts?—I think it is general throughout the country. I do not know that we are specially worse off than other large towns.

1810. The Poor-law guardians are, roughly, in the habit of considering the cause that induces applications for relief, are not they?—Yes; we put it down at West Ham almost entirely to the weather, the abnormal number of applications for relief.

1811. You state that as clerk to the Poor-law guardians; and does that embody the view of the guardians?—Yes, I believe it does.

1812. Now what industries in your knowledge (if any) are declining in West Ham?—I do not know at this moment that they are declining.

1813. May I ask you whether the Poor-law Authorities of West Ham and the Town Council of West Ham have convoked a conference of all the agencies that there are in West Ham, in

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

which and by which money is perhaps dissipated, and overlapping of energy takes place; have you done that?—I do not quite understand the question.

1814. Have the Poor-law guardians called a conference of representatives, first from the Works Committee, say, of the Town Council, a member or two of the School Board, representatives from the Trades Council, from the friendly societies and private agencies?—No; all that they have done is to see deputations from Leyton and West Ham.

1815. You have confined yourself to seeing deputations, and there has been no formal or official co-operation of the various agencies, private and public, in West Ham?—No; excepting in so far as I have previously stated.

1816. Do not you think that great relief might be brought to the destitute at once if such a conference was called?—I do not think so; because, as I have said before, we have no difficulty in dealing with the cases that apply to us, and those that do not we have really nothing to do with.

1817. I will put it in this way: Have you not heard in other districts of a collective representative committee of all agencies in the parish concentrating through a general committee upon the distribution of relief over the whole parish?—Yes, I have heard of it; but I doubt very much whether it would be productive of much good.

1818. Now have you reached your rate limit in West Ham?—Oh, no.

1819. Well, why do you say that the locality is unable to spend more money on relief works and for the relief of distress, unless you have reached your rate limit?—I never said we were unable to spend any more, I think.

1820. Then I gather from you that it has not been officially declared that you have either reached your rate limit or that you are unable to spend any more money on relief?—Certainly not; it has never been said so.

Wednesday, 27th February 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT :

Mr. Acland.
Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. Billson.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Mather.
Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. Round.
Mr. Whiteley.
Mr. John Wilson (Durham).
Mr. John Wilson (Govan).
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. FREDERIC EDWARD HILLEARY, LL.D., re-called; and further Examined.

Mr. *John Burns.*

1821. IN the last question I asked you yesterday, when the Committee adjourned, I was dealing with your rate limit and borrowing powers, and following that up, I would ask you whether you happen to have in your possession a rate paper, or a precept paper for the last West Ham rates; could you tell us how your rate is divided. I hold in my hand the uniform rate paper; can you say, for instance, what is your local sewer rate in the £?—I have not that here, but I can send it you later.

1822. You cannot say what the sewer rate is, or the lighting rate?—No.

1823. Nor the general rate?—No.

1824. The item I want specific information upon is: What is the poor rate out of your total rate? You said yesterday, I think, that out of 8*s.* in the £, which West Ham pays as its total rates, 1*s.* 4*d.* was paid for poor rate?—I think I said 1*s.* 1*d.* was the actual rate for the poor throughout the union—that is to say, if we had only to levy for the poor, pure and simple, we should only have to call upon the union for 1*s.* 1*d.* That called forth the reply that that was less than the rate in London, which was 1*s.* 4*d.* in the £.

1825. I gather from you that for Poor-law purposes in the West Ham Poor-law Union your rate for those purposes, corresponding to what is a rate of 1*s.* 4*d.* in the Metropolis, is 1*s.* 1*d.*?—The call of the union is 1*s.* 1*d.* That may be modified in this way, that possibly the parishes would have to call for a little more than that.

1826. How much?—Of course, it would vary in each parish.

1827. Would we be generally within the mark if we said that the poor rate for West Ham was between 1*s.* 2*d.* and 1*s.* 3*d.* for the union?—Yes, I think you might say that.

1828. You are aware that in some parishes within the Metropolis the poor rate, for similar purposes to those for which West Ham pays

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

1*s.* 2*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.*, is as high as 1*s.* 11*d.* and 2*s.* 1*d.*?—Yes, I believe it is. I do not know of my own actual knowledge.

1829. Do you know, as a matter of fact, that the district that I represent has a poor rate of 1*s.* 10*d.* in the £, as appears in this rate paper which I hold in my hand?—I did not know that. I know the rates are very high in some parishes.

1830. That is 7*d.* more than the general average poor rate in the West Ham Poor-law Union, as I understand?—That would be so.

1831. Have you applied for a loan to the Local Government Board for the exceptional distress, or for relief works?—Last year we did.

1832. How much?—I think it was 3,000*l.* or 4,000*l.*; some comparatively small amount.

1833. What was it for?—For the laying out of Wanstead Flats, and laying down cricket and football pitches, and they gave us five years to repay it in.

1834. How long was it after you sent the application for the loan that you received a reply?—I cannot answer that question, but it was some time.

1835. Will you let the Committee know that?—Certainly.

1836. I ask the question, because it is exceedingly important that we should know whether the Local Government Board does or does not unnecessarily delay answers to applications?—I have made a note of the questions I cannot answer, and I will see that the Committee have the information.

1837. The loan you say was granted?—Yes.

1838. To the best of your recollection, was it, or was it not, a long time before it was granted?—My recollection is that it was some time.

1839. Being for relief works, I suppose it was a pressing matter?—I can hardly say that it was pressing, because, of course, we had the borough fund, and the General District rate to take it out of; the delay did not inconvenience us at all.

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

1840. Did you, in anticipation of the consent of the Local Government Board to your loan, start on with the works?—Certainly.

1841. Generally speaking, that is the rule, is it not?—Certainly.

1842. What is your local indebtedness?—I think it is under half a million; it is about 450,000*l.*

1843. You are speaking of the Town Council?—Yes.

1844. Does that include the indebtedness of the School Board, the Poor-law, and local authorities?—No, that is simply the Town Council.

1845. Has that been incurred mainly for new roads, streets, sewers, and so forth?—Yes.

1846. Over what period has this 500,000*l.* been incurred?—Pretty nearly entirely since the Council came into existence; that is, in about eight years.

1847. It is eight years since you were incorporated?—Yes.

1848. In that period have they contracted a loan of 500,000*l.*?—Not quite all that, for there was a balance, but roughly it was so.

1849. What is your rateable value?—Close on 1,000,000*l.*

1850. Then it is not true as reported that your rateable value is 1,600,000*l.*?—That is the rateable value of the union.

1851. The rateable value of the union is 1,600,000*l.*, and of the Town Council nearly 1,000,000*l.*; is that it?—That is so.

1852. Have you received a visit from the Local Government Board Inspector at the board of guardians?—He has been down there on two occasions lately; he was there yesterday.

1853. Which of the Inspectors was that; Mr. Lockwood?—Yes.

1854. What did he tell the board of guardians?—He was not at the board; he was only at the office.

1855. What was the object of his visit?—I think he came down yesterday on the casual question.

1856. Have you got the figures of your casuals, and, if so, will you hand them in?—I have only just got them; I have not had an opportunity of reading them through. I would sooner supply the figures later, if you will allow me.

1857. Has Mr. Lockwood attended the West Ham Board of Guardians on behalf of the Local Government Board and urged the board, as he has done several other boards in London, that in cases where applicants for relief through distress arising from want of employment refuse to go into the workhouse, or where the workhouse is full, the relieving officer should take that relief to the men's own houses?—No, I do not remember his having said that.

1858. He has not said that to you, nor to the West Ham Guardians?—Not to my recollection. He has not been at the board for some time.

1859. I understand he has not done to you what he has done to several other parishes?—I do not know anything of that.

1860. Am I to gather definitely from you that the Local Government Board Inspector has not suggested to the West Ham Guardians that in exceptional cases where the workhouse was full, and applicants could not go into the workhouse, relief should be taken by the officers to their houses?—I have no recollection of his having said so to the board.

1861. Do you agree with Mr. Keir-Hardie that, given money from any source, there is roughly work enough for the next few months to give the physically able-bodied men work in West Ham?—You mean work from all sources?

1862. Yes.—Of course I am speaking without data, but I should think there would be, as soon as the weather was absolutely cleared.

1863. If the weather would permit of ground work, the opening up of roads and streets, the cleansing of sewers, the filling up of ditches and general sanitary work, that you have not done to the extent your medical officers recommend, but which you would do if you had the money; you think there is work enough of that description to keep the able-bodied in West Ham at work for a month or two?—I could not say that there was enough, taking only the work the Town Council could give, but when the weather is perfectly open, and all the contractors and builders set their operations in motion, they, together with the Town Council, will be enabled to absorb to a very large extent, at any rate, the able-bodied unemployed in the borough.

1864. But with regard to the remnant that are not absorbed by private industry, is there sufficient sanitary unskilled labour work to give them employment?—I can only answer generally that we have a great deal of it, which our borough engineer, who is present, will be able to detail to you; you will get it better from him than from me.

1865. Supposing this Committee was to give you 5,000*l.* or 50,000*l.*, what would you, as clerk to the Poor-law Union, advise should be done with it?—I should advise that it should be employed, in the first instance, in relieving the necessities of the unemployed who are out of work owing to stress of weather. I would pay their rents, and I would feed them.

1866. But when the weather broke would you still pay their rents and feed them?—Certainly not; they would go back into employment.

1867. Am I to gather from you that, pending the weather permitting the unemployed to go to work, you would pay their rates and their rent, and would feed them?—Yes.

1868. Where there was a balance over, would you spend the balance upon general sanitary works for the improvement of the parish?—You are speaking of the union, I presume. The guardians would only have to relieve distress; I do not think they should have a grant-in-aid of anything but exceptional distress.

1869. But supposing that the guardians had paid the rates and the rent, and relieved the exceptional distress of those people within their jurisdiction, would you suggest the grant of another sum of money from the 50,000*l.* to the local authority to enable the surveyor to put on more men on sanitary work?—No, I should say, send the balance back.

1870. You would have some of the money apportioned to West Ham uses exclusively through the guardians for the relief of temporary distress arising from the want of employment?—That is, if it was sent to us.

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

1871. In a word, without disfranchisement you would relax outdoor relief?—I would in those exceptional circumstances.

1872. Do you think that, as an official to the Poor-law union, this extra relaxation of outdoor relief would be a real kindness to West Ham?—I think it would be a real kindness to the then unemployed people. Do you mean to the borough itself?

1873. Yes; let me put it in this way: Would not this temporary, spasmodic kindness to West Ham be a permanent cruelty to the whole of the union?—I am assuming that the same thing would be done all over the country. You are not singling out West Ham, are you?

1874. Yes, I am?—I do not think they would take it for themselves only.

1875. You do not think they would take it for themselves if it were confined only to West Ham?—I do not think so for a moment.

1876. Why would they not take it?—I do not think they are in a financial position to require special aid over and above all the other districts in the country.

1877. You do not look upon West Ham as a specially-distressed district, requiring exceptional treatment as apart from the rest of the country?—I dare say there is worse distress there than in some other places; but, on the other hand, I dare say there are other places that are worse off than we are.

1878. I gather from the previous answers you have given that, unlike the rest of the Poor-law unions in and around London, you spend more in out-relief normally than you do in in-relief?—The figure is 22,000*l.* for indoor relief and 32,000*l.* for outdoor relief.

1879. Generally speaking, it is the other way round in the Metropolis, is it not?—Yes, it is.

1880. Is your outdoor relief increasing or declining as compared with what it was three or four years ago?—It is increasing, I think.

1881. Then I am to gather from you, as clerk to the Poor-law guardians, that your out-door relief is increasing, roughly speaking, in proportion as within the Metropolis it is declining?—Yes. Of course, there is a special reason for that. Our house is full and over full, and we have purchased 40 acres of land in one of the parishes of the union, and we have the sanction of the Local Government Board to build a large building which will cost about 100,000*l.* or 120,000*l.* for an infirmary. That will, of course, relieve our house to a large extent, and the guardians will be able, if they choose, to apply the house test to a larger extent than they can at the moment.

1882. I gather from you that when your new accommodation is completed the ratio of increase of the outdoor relief will not be as rapid as it has been during the last two years?—It will not be quite so rapid, but still it will increase, the tendency being to encourage rather than to discourage outdoor relief.

1883. Given the possibility of work for the able-bodied, under all circumstances would you insist upon a labour test of some kind being imposed?—I do not know about a labour test; I think there should be some test to meet those cases where the men will not work and never

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

intend to work; I am informed there are some considerable number of such men about; I think they are called "loafers."

1884. Your experience suggests that there are a few of that description, does it not?—That is so.

1885. You spoke about having a system of providing people with free soup, where they were exceptionally destitute?—Yes.

1886. Would you, as a Poor-law officer, undertake the distribution of that?—I was intending to limit that, as I did what I said about the rent and the food, to exceptional distress. I did not mean giving it promiscuously to all sorts and conditions of paupers.

1887. I will go from that point to another, which is very pertinent. Have you formed, or have the Poor-law guardians of West Ham formed, any opinion based on experience as to the wisdom, or otherwise, of having recurring relief works every winter?—No; they have not touched works at all from that point of view.

1888. Have you not considered the relation of relief works undertaken every year for recurring distress by the local authority towards the Poor-law, which you as a Poor-law union administer?—There is a suggestion that land should be taken, and that these men should be put on it under the old Act of Elizabeth.

1889. That has not been put into force in your district?—That has not been put into force.

1890. Can you say why?—The guardians have not given directions for it to be put into force.

1891. Has there been a deputation asking for it to be put into force?—Yes.

1892. Have you applied to the Local Government Board to put it into operation?—No.

1893. Have you submitted a plan?—No.

1894. Have you co-operated with other districts in a joint scheme for cultivating the land under those conditions?—No.

1895. Am I to gather from you that a land scheme under that old Act has not been officially considered by the guardians?—It has not been acted upon.

1896. I will put it in that way; it has not been acted upon?—Quite so.

1897. And an application for it has not been sent to the Local Government Board?—It has not been sent out, but I may say, in regard to that, that if we had it during this weather it would be no use.

1898. That is very interesting. You say, supposing you had asked for i, and the Local Government Board had considered your scheme, and approved it, you do not think such a scheme would give even the physically able-bodied unemployed in West Ham much relief?—No, on the contrary; it is cruel to put men, as I am informed, on to the land in this weather. I gather that from Mr. Thorne, who is a labour leader, I believe.

1899. And a very intelligent one, too?—He is on the Council of West Ham. He said he had undertaken some of this work himself to see what it was, that is to say, picking up these roads that I alluded to yesterday, Quadrant-street and Biddulph-street, and he said it was actual cruelty. He is physically a very strong man, and he said, "If I cannot do it, I do not think anybody can."

That

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

That was in the exceptionally frosty weather that we have gone through.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

1900. That was in relation to digging up roads?—Yes, Quadrant-street and Bidder-street.

Mr. *John Burns.*

1901. Then am I to gather from you that if this land scheme were adopted it would be comparatively useless where men were displaced by exceptionally hard frost, where the ground was almost like adamant through there being ten degrees of frost?—Yes.

1902. And as applied to streets and roads that are macadamised it would be still worse, I presume.—Yes.

1903. Mr. Will Thorne, in open council, confirms that view, I understand?—He spoke on it to that effect without being asked.

1904. Have the guardians of West Ham considered the question of relief works being asked for every year, and in the event of their being granted, taking place, with these men who apply for relief work with outdoor relief under the very lax conditions previously created?—No; they have not done anything of the sort.

1905. Have you any knowledge, or have you asked your surveyor, as to whether relief works should not be closely watched and keenly supervised?—The borough engineer will be better able to speak to that than I can.

1906. Do you think the abolition of the disqualification arising from receipt of relief, either in money or in kind, would deter or encourage men to go on and off the relief works?—I do not think it would hurt the class I am alluding to, or anybody else.

1907. You do not think they specially consider that?—Yes, I do. I say that they will not apply, or some of them will not apply, for pauper relief until they have sold their last stick.

1908. Then I am to gather from you that applicants for work both to the local authority in West Ham and to the Poor-law Union will not disqualify themselves from political rights until they have parted with everything?—That is so as regards the Poor-law Union. Of course they go to the other, because it does not pauperise them.

1909. You said in your opinion the municipality should not have anything to do with the unemployed?—I did.

1910. You said it should be left to Parliament?—Yes.

1911. Why do you say that?—I say it should be left to Parliament to say what is to be done. What I wanted to convey to the Committee was this: That these Circulars from the Local Government Board are sent from time to time, and the impression has got about in that and other ways that the guardians, and the Town Council, and the urban sanitary districts, are the proper people to relieve these unemployed. Deputations and letters go from the guardians to the sanitary authorities and backwards and forwards; discussions ensue; nothing is done, and the people get very irate. We had at two of our Council meetings 500 people in the corridor of our Town Hall, and if it had not been for Mr. William Thorne I would not have answered for the consequences; they were talking very loud, and things were getting really very serious. The position, as my Council say, is really getting intolerable. We say we are not the proper people to do anything, but if we are to do anything please say so.

1912. I gather from you that this misunderstanding and friction that occasionally occurs in West Ham is due, in the first place, to a misunderstanding between the Poor-law union and the local authority as to what their powers are; secondly, to the lack of definite instructions as to what those powers are from the Local Government Board; and, thirdly, to the fact that you have not the means as a Poor-law union to deal with relief other than that which disqualifies the recipient?—That is so to a large extent, but the Local Government Board have themselves not the power. They are suggesting these works, and they cannot give us the power to carry them out.

1913. I gather from that answer that you think that neither the local authority, the Poor-law guardians, nor the Local Government Board have in themselves sufficient powers, even if they act together, to deal with the unemployed?—That is precisely what I wanted to imply.

1914. Passing from that point, let me ask you, in the event of Parliament through the Local Government Board deciding upon some means by which the Poor-law union, the Town Council, and the Local Government Board could act automatically and spontaneously in this matter, would you not have the responsibility of carrying out the details of the administration thrown upon the local authority?—Certainly, I should think so. I do not see that it would be any good to create another authority to give effect to it.

1915. You do not want to create another authority?—No.

1916. You do not want Unemployed Commissioners?—No, certainly not.

1917. Your opinion, based upon your experience, would be that the men best qualified to detect imposture, to relieve genuine distress, and to grapple with the difficulty on the spot would be the local popularly elected authorities?—Yes.

1918. You said that at West Ham out of the number of unemployed who have been temporarily workless you did not think more than 300 or 400 of the whole lot would be inclined to go to a labour colony, or to take part in any land scheme, which incidentally has not been sanctioned?—Yes, that was merely an opinion; I have no means of testing it.

1919. Generally speaking, you do not find a man who once leaves a rural district and goes to a town very much inclined to go back to the country, especially when there are 10 degrees of frost; that is natural enough?—That is so.

1920. You said you were opposed to the stone-yard, did you not?—Did I say so?

1921. I will ask you, are you opposed to the stone-yard?—Yes, and no. There ought to be a test, but I think it is a pity that there could not be some less arduous test than stone-breaking.

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

1922. But you have less arduous tests; you have oakum-picking and wood-chopping, have you not?—Yes, but it is only the old men who are put on to wood-chopping.

1923. Let us deal with the stone-yard first. Do you think that many of the moral defects that result from honest unemployed men working in the stone-yard would disappear if the stone-yard for the *bonâ fide* unemployed was transferred from the Poor-law union to the borough surveyor?—It would make a large difference; you mean, I presume, the pauper test being removed.

1924. No, I am not dealing with that. My question is this: Taking the exceptional distress among the *bonâ fide* unemployed men, which is now met by sending them to the Poor-law stone-yard, would not the defects arising from that condition of things be removed if the same work of breaking stones in the Poor-law yard was transferred entirely to the borough surveyor?—If it were done under the same circumstances, I do not think it would make any difference.

1925. Have you not received, as Poor-law clerk, reports from the superintendent of the stone-yard, to the effect that when a genuine unemployed man goes into the stone-yard the moral consequences of the association with the casual and the hardened stone-yard men are disastrous upon his moral fibre; has not that been reported to you?—No, I have not had that reported; but we could classify them at the stone-yard if it was thought necessary.

1926. Would not the classification of the borough surveyor be a better classification without the stigma of pauperism which the Poor-law Union stone-yard now gives?—Certainly; that is what I said in the first instance, that without the stigma of pauperism it would make all the difference.

1927. You said you had oakum-picking also, I think. Whom do you give the oakum-picking to. Would that be for the old men?—Yes, that is given to people not quite so able-bodied as the stone-yard people.

1928. You have also wood-chopping; to what extent is that done?—It is done to a very considerable extent.

1929. Can you say how many thousand bundles a day are turned out of the wood-chopping yard?—I do not know. I can send you that information.

1930. You say that it is done to a considerable extent. Does not the wood-chopping undertaken by the local authority interfere with the competitive industry outside, and are you not displacing through this unemployed labour work which genuine labour previously did outside?—I think to a small extent that would be so.

1931. Have you had any representations from displaced professional wood-choppers about the chopping of wood being undertaken by the guardians?—I do not remember one.

1932. Where do you sell the wood?—To various people. They sent it round in a cart, I believe.

1933. Do you make a profit on it?—I think there is a profit made.

1934. Are your bundles the same size as those outside?—I am not at all sure; they are not larger; but I will not undertake to say.

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

1935. They are larger than those outside, are they not?—I believe they are.

1936. Are not your bundles at West Ham, like "General" Booth's bundles, rapidly driving the professional wood-chopper into the ranks of the unemployed?—I have no evidence of that.

1937. What do you sell the bundles at per hundred?—I cannot say. I will send you these particulars.

1938. Is it not the fact that you sell them at 2*s.* 3*d.* the hundred, the bundles being 15 inches in circumference, as against 2*s.* 6*d.* per hundred for bundles 14 inches in circumference outside?—That does not come before me; but I will send up the exact particulars.

1939. Can you say, from your experience, what proportion of your unemployed that apply for relief have been displaced either as wood-choppers, as market-gardeners, as bricklayers, or as carpenters through "General" Booth's labour colonies and municipal workshops at Hadleigh, in Essex?—I could not possibly answer that question.

1940. Have you ever taken a census of your unemployed to ascertain the number displaced by those outside philanthropic agencies?—No.

1941. Did you know that wood-chopping is done by "General" Booth?—That I did not know.

1942. Do not you think that even to a small extent your wood-chopping in times of exceptional distress throws men out of employment?—It would necessarily have some effect on the trade, of course.

1943. Have the carpenters and bricklayers at West Ham complained to the Poor-law union about their being deprived of work, because thers are carpenters and bricklayers and painters and plumbers receiving 6*s.* and 8*s.* a week and their board from "General" Booth, who are consequently able to build houses at a cheaper rate than the builders who would employ these applicants if they did the work?—No, we have nothing to do with "General" Booth at all; and there have been no applications made to us in any shape or form.

1944. Generally speaking, am I to gather from you that labour colonies, municipal workshops, and industries that compete with existing trades are not sympathetically viewed by the men in West Ham. You say, as I understand, that Mr. Will Thorne objects to the labour colony. Is that view shared by other labour leaders in West Ham?—I do not know.

1945. You think it is a reasonable objection, do you?—I cannot say.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

1946. May I ask whether what Will Thorne objected to was labour colonies, or was it not to men being employed on the roads during severe frost?—I did not say anything about labour colonies, to the best of my recollection; what I said was that Mr. Councillor Thorne objected very much to men being put to this exceptionally heavy work on the roads during the inclement weather as being a cruel test.

Chairman.

1947. His objection was based rather on the weather than the nature of the work?—The work

Chairman—continued.

work itself, *ex* the frost, there would have been no question about.

Mr. *Lawrence.*

1948. I understood you to say that your authority has borrowed 1,500*l.* for relief works at Wanstead Flats. What other sums have they borrowed on loan for relief works?—I think that is the only one that they ever did borrow.

1949. Supposing there was a Central Fund offered to various municipalities for helping the unemployed in various ways, and only a few municipalities availed themselves of the offer, would not paupers be attracted to those municipalities that did avail themselves of it, so that ultimately those districts would be extra burdened, while those municipalities who did not avail themselves of the offer would be free from the congestion of population and the burden of taxation, in consequence?—Yes, I think that is very likely.

1950. You were asked a question about the stone-yard; is it not the case that the stone-yard is practically inevitable, not merely as a test, but as supplying the only work that does not compete with outside labour, and because it is the most easily done by the majority of the unemployed?—Yes, I believe that is so; I can, at any rate, answer the first part of the question in the affirmative.

1951. You cannot imagine any other kind of work that would meet the case generally so well as the stone-yard does?—No; that is the difficulty. You cannot find another alternative.

1952. You told us that you, as an official of the local authority, in applying to the Local Government Board, quoted an unofficial census. Do not you think it is rather an unusual thing for an official, responsible body to shield themselves behind a census which is unofficial and not responsible?—It is the best evidence at one's disposal. The thing was urgent, and one had to do the best one could.

1953. How many miles off from the centre of your district would you have rural labourers receiving wages at the ordinary rural rate?—I cannot say.

1954. Let me put my question in this way: I want to see to what extent rural labourers receiving the ordinary low wages in the country would be liable to be affected by the high wages in your district. How far from the country districts, pure and simple, would your district be?—I should think about 10 or 12 miles.

Chairman.

1955. I gathered from what you said that the numbers in receipt of relief down to the second week of January in this year were not in excess of the numbers in previous years?—Do you mean in the stone-yard, or generally?

1956. I mean generally?—I have here the figures of outdoor relief and the number of persons relieved, and I observe in December, 1893, and January, 1894, 6,176*l.* was spent in relief, and the number relieved was 77,628, while in December, 1894, and January, 1895, the number relieved was 75,596; so that it was a little less than in the previous year.

1957. It is since the middle of January that the large comparative increase has taken place?—Yes.

Chairman—continued.

1958. You told the honourable Member for Battersea that the workhouse accommodation in West Ham is insufficient?—That is so.

1959. Has the Local Government Board urged upon the guardians the duty of increasing the accommodation?—Yes.

1960. Repeatedly?—Repeatedly.

1961. I understand you have acquired a site?—Yes; and the plans are passed by the Local Government Board for the erection of an infirmary thereon.

1962. Has there been any considerable delay in carrying out the work?—There has. In the first place, we intended to put schools on the site; we got the plans prepared for that, and we thought the existing schools would be available for the indoor test for general pauperism. Then it was thought better to leave the schools where they were and erect an infirmary on this site. That took necessarily some considerable time. Then a further complication arose by reason of the guardians objecting to proceed unless the Local Government Board would allow them to borrow the money for 50 years instead of 30 years, the guardians being strongly of opinion that 30 years for a permanent structure of this sort was too short a time, more especially looking at the fact that the Education Department will grant 50 years.

1963. Has that difference been settled?—It was mentioned by one of the deputation to the President, and he said that under the Public Health Act the most that ever was allowed was 60 years, and that 30 years was the outside for buildings of this description, and that the Local Government Board themselves had no powers to give more than 30 years, whereupon it was suggested that the Local Government Board should promote a Provisional Order for the purpose of obtaining the necessary power; but I gathered from the President and Sir Hugh Owen that even if they had the power they were not disposed to give it us in this instance as not being a suitable subject.

1964. Is the erection of the new workhouse hung up until that difference of opinion is settled?—It is coming before the Board to-morrow. It is only hung up to the extent of a month, because the plans have only just been passed practically.

1965. The absence of sufficient workhouse accommodation naturally accounts to a good extent, at all events, for the excess of out-relief, does it not?—It does. The Board have been obliged to give their relieving officer instructions not to allow any more in the house.

1966. It prevents you from applying the workhouse test in cases where otherwise this test would be imposed?—That is so.

1967. You have used the labour test. Is this labour test applied every day in the week?—It is now, and has been for some time past. When the weather gets better it will probably be open only about three or four days a week.

1968. When it is applied only occasionall is there not some chance of a man getting employment elsewhere on the other days?—Certainly; that is the object; that he may have a chance of getting work away from the stone-yard.

Chairman—continued.

1969. Does a man living that sort of life come under the head of "Destitute"?—It depends upon each particular case on the relieving officer, and whether he is satisfied.

1970. How far have the guardians been able to make inquiry through their officers as to the circumstances of the applicants for relief. Have you taken any steps to meet the case by increasing the number of your officers, or in any other way?—No, we have not found it necessary to do that. We have 16 officers in all, and we have not found any difficulty at present in inquiring into the cases. The relieving officers in each case make strict inquiries into the circumstances and position of the applicants.

1971. Can you say at all how many cases each of those officers may have to inquire into?—No; it would be a very considerable number.

1972. You think it is not too large a number for the officer to be able to discharge his duty properly?—No, they sub-divide the district immediately, that is the case. We have recently appointed two others.

1973. Do the officers visit the homes of the persons applying for relief?—Yes.

1974. Is there anything you wish to add to your evidence?—Perhaps I may correct one statement that I made yesterday. I said that the School Board rate in West Ham was 2*s.* 3*d.*; I find the actual rate last year was 1*s.* 11*d.* It did happen one half-year that the rate was 1*s.* 1*d.*, and that is how I made the mistake.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

1975. Do you say the average is 1*s.* 11*d.*?—I say this year it is 1*s.* 11*d.*

Mr. Percy Alden, M.A., called in; and Examined.

Chairman.

1976. Will you say in what capacity you can give us information as to the state of things in West Ham?—I have been a resident in the poorest part of the district for about four years and six months; I have a personal acquaintance with many thousands of working men; I am a Councillor of the borough, and have been so for three years next November; I am in touch with the trades unions and labour organisations in the district; I was honorary secretary of the West Ham Relief Fund, which has been mentioned here several times, to which Mr. Hills contributed, and which consisted of the Council, the guardians, the School Board, employers and labour leaders (that was last winter), and for two winters in succession I have had to do with a census of the unemployed. On my own initiative last winter I made a census covering a fairly wide area. I found in this special area there were 3,000 male workers, and 33 per cent. last winter of those male workers were out of work, and 47 per cent. of them were casual workers. That will correspond with the census which has been made this winter, I having charge of the southern portion of the borough, and I presume that I shall be asked some questions concerning that census.

1977. You have also some connection, have you not, with the University Settlement in that district?—Yes, I am the Warden of the University Settlement, which is situated in Canning Town.

1978. Is Canning Town a poor district?—It is a very poor district; the poorest in West Ham.

1979. Will you give the Committee some account of this census which has been recently taken?—It arose in this way: I had made a statement to Lord Rosebery, when speaking for the deputation of the unemployed at Stratford Town Hall, to the effect that there were at least 5,000 unemployed in West Ham at that time; this statement Lord Rosebery said did not agree with his information.

1980. What date are you speaking of?—I have not the exact date; it was in December last; December the 19th, I think. The Trades Council of West Ham thought after I made that statement it ought either to be substantiated or disproved, and so they determined that they would make a census, and make it as efficient as they possibly could. All the labour organisations, as well as representatives and delegates from various trades unions, united in the matter, and, after various committees, a plan of action was agreed upon.

1981. Let the Committee clearly understand who it was who united in taking the census?—The trades unions of the district, which send delegates to the Trades Council, and the labour organisations in the district, of which I may give as examples the Social Democratic Federation and the Independent Labour Party. They were requested to unite with the Trades Council.

1982. In appointing delegates to conduct this census?—In appointing delegates to the committee which was to conduct the census. A house to house visitation was made over the entire borough, the only exception being some few streets in the north of the borough, where wealthy or well-to-do people resided; and also the shopkeepers, where it was an understood thing there were no lodgers; that is to say, if a shopkeeper inhabited a shop by himself and his family, and there were no lodgers, we did not call there, we left him out of account. As the result of this house to house visitation with the canvass papers, which were filled up with various particulars, we came to the conclusion that there were 10,140 workers out of employment, about 1,000 of whom were women, so that excluding women and children from workers (of course, children over 11 years old sometimes go to work) there would be 9,000 men out of work at the time that census was taken.

1983. That would be in January, would it?—The census was completed about the 20th January

Chairman—continued.

January, before the frost set in to any great extent at any rate.

Mr. *Bartley.*

1984. Is that the number for West Ham union?—That is for West Ham borough, and not the union.

1985. What would be the total population of the borough?—The estimated population is 238,000, probably 250,000 by now. In the southern portion of the borough the result comes out very much worse than in the northern portion. I can give the Committee the figures for the whole borough north and south, separating the two districts.

Chairman.

1986. The borough comes down to the river, does it not?—Yes, right down to the river

1987. Will you give us the figures?—In the northern portion of the borough there were 13,880 men in work, and in the southern portion of the borough there were 14,503, making a total of 28,383 in work; that would be exclusive of the commercial classes. Out of work, there were in the north portion 2,162, 400 of whom were women; in the southern portion 7,969, about 600 of whom were women.

1988. That makes together about 10,000?—10,131, that is, roughly speaking, 9,000 men out of work.

1989. That would mean that a fourth of the working population in those two divisions were out of work?—Yes, a fourth of the men. I should like to say that some portions of the borough, even in the south, are much worse than the other portions, especially the dock district, and that was where the main difficulty came in—to separate the casual from the ordinary unemployed men. In order to get the figures as accurate and careful as possible, I sometimes checked one street four or five times by sending different canvassers, and on the whole the results were not very different; there were some slight discrepancies, but not sufficient to shake the accuracy of the whole census.

1990. By "unemployed," do you mean a man who was not working when the canvasser called, or a man as to whom it was ascertained that he was permanently out of work?—By "unemployed" I mean that the man was unemployed on that day. If he were in work on that day, even supposing he were a casual labourer who only did one day in three weeks, he would be put down as in work.

1991. And, on the other hand, a man might have been in work for two or three days, but being out of work on that particular day he would be counted as unemployed?—Yes, it cuts both ways, and is about fair when you average it. In addition to that, we took the number of casual labourers as far as we possibly could.

1992. Do you consider the methods employed were satisfactory on the whole?—I think they might have been much more perfect, and I should very much like to see a Government or official inspection taken in such a case as this.

Chairman—continued.

1993. Where do you class the casual labourers?—We have a special section for the casual labourers.

1994. Where do they come into the figures you have given us?—There were in casual employment in the north of the borough 1,105, and in the south of the borough 5,071; but these numbers do not exactly represent the whole number of casual labourers, because quite a considerable number of those who were in work on that day were casual labourers, and the figures are not accurate in that respect. I could not venture to say these are accurate figures with regard to the casual labour of the district, and, indeed, I think it is almost impossible, without a most careful canvass, to get the accurate figures as regards casual labour.

1995. What do you mean by a casual labourer?—I mean a man who has no regular employment, but works for different men in different works, and perhaps does, on the average, two or three days a week.

1996. He picks up jobs where he can?—Yes, as best he can.

1997. The census you said was taken before the frost became so severe as it has been?—Yes.

1998. It was, however, frosty weather in January; were what are called the season's trades out?—No; the season's trades were not out. The building trades were still in when the census was completed. The census was practically completed, except for the wealthier portions of the borough, before the frost set in.

1999. Do you consider that the unemployed that were shown in this census were men unemployed independently altogether of the frost?—Certainly. I believe there were 7,000 unemployed men in South West Ham before the frost set in.

2000. And those numbers have been greatly increased, of course, since then by the frost?—They have been enormously increased by the frost.

2001. What trades have suffered most?—General labourers, dockers, stevedores, coalies or coal porters, lightermen, bargemen, and riverside workers generally, apart from the building trades—of course, they always suffer in the winter time.

2002. Those were the men who suffered from the frost?—Yes.

2003. What trades were they mostly that you found out of employment before the frost?—I think over the whole borough out of the 9,000 nearly 2,000, or perhaps quite 2,000, would be skilled men—such as boiler-makers, engineers, and stevedores, if you call stevedores skilled men; they have to place the cargo, and I should consider they were skilled men; and in addition to those, sailors and firemen; sailors, at any rate, are skilled men—a great number of sailors were out of work. A large number of the sailors who leave the Port of London live in Canning Town and that district. Then, there were a large number of sugar makers out of employment, owing to the fact that Martineau's, a sugar firm, was shut up, and has not been doing any work lately at all.

2004. How many do they employ?—The census gives us about 160 sugar makers out of

Chairman—continued.

work. I could not tell how many men they employ, but judging from that figure, if our census is at all correct, they ought to be employing about 200 men.

2005. Taking the Thames Shipbuilding Company, were many of their men out?—Yes, a very great number; they are a little busier now, but to-day they are employing only 1,600 men, whereas a little over four years ago, when I went to Canning Town, they were employing 4,000 men. Of course, this figure of 1,600 is only a rough estimate; I could not pledge myself to an actual definite number, but I should say they are employing between 1,600 and 1,800 men, not more than 1,800 at the very outside.

2006. Those are the trades affected, but in your view, living as you do in the locality, what is the cause of so many people being out of employment?—I think there are a very large number of causes. Would you wish me to give you my ideas as to the causes of chronic want of employment in this district?

2007. Will you mention any causes peculiar to the district, or particularly affecting the district?—I think one very important cause is the fact that we have a large number of factories and two docks, the Victoria and Albert and the East India Docks close by, offering attraction to a huge number of artisans and general labourers; these men are drawn to the district, and the nature of the labour to a large extent is precarious. The result is that the moment any depression of trade comes (I use the term "depression of trade" for want of any better explanation at present) those men are thrown upon the rates, or, if not thrown upon the rates, they are out of work, and for the most part starve. Then again, at West Ham we are in Essex, and, as has been pointed out, close to the agricultural districts of Essex, and the depopulation that has been going on in Essex has been reported upon, and can be found in the Blue Books. The land has gone out of cultivation, and many agricultural labourers from there have come to us looking for work in the docks and factories. It would not be an exaggeration to say that 40 per cent. of the men who work as general labourers in Canning Town and South West Ham have either been on the land or in some way or other connected with the land. Then there are other reasons for this chronic want of employment in South West Ham, and in West Ham generally. I think one reason is that, although the Dock Company employs more permanent men, or rather the permanent staff is larger, the shipowners employ casuals to a larger extent than before, owing to the fact that in the Victoria and Albert Dock the shipowners now do the work in place of the Dock Company. I could give you some figures if you cared to have them; at any rate, I could give you a general idea of the work that is done there. The Dock Company has more permanent men, but they do no import work to speak of, and only shed and rail work in the export department. Absolutely all the rest is done by men employed by the shipowners and contractors, and, taking account of this, the Albert and Victoria Docks must be considered an exception to the other docks. The shipowners and contractors do all

Chairman—continued.

the discharging and all the import work except tobacco; and thus one sees the reason why there is such a large number of casual dockers in our district, and the district immediately adjoining the Albert and Victoria Docks.

Mr. *Jackson.*

2008. May I ask, in order to make it clear, does this mean that there has been any change which has led to a larger number being out of employment, or that a less number is employed now under the system you describe?—Yes, a change has been effected. The Dock Company, in connection with contractors, used to do most of the work, I believe, in times gone by, but now the Dock Company has thrown the responsibility upon the shipowners in the Victoria and Albert Docks, and, as a matter of fact, the shipowners and contractors do most of the work. They do by far the greater proportion of the work now that is done there.

Chairman.

2009. And therefore there is less continuity of employment to the individual man?—Yes. Most of those men that are employed by the shipowners are employed by the hour, so to speak.

Mr. *Jackson.*

2010. That does not quite answer the question as to whether a less number is employed now than was employed before?—Well, I think that fewer men are employed than used to be employed, because the shipowners work them in smaller gangs than they used to; they put on fewer men than they used to in discharging the vessels.

Mr. *John Burns.*

2011. Fewer men to a gang?—To a gang.

2012. But more men in the aggregate?—That all depends upon the ship; they do not put on more men in the aggregate if the shipping decreases. If the shipping is increasing they probably put on more men in the aggregate, I should say; but you have the figures.

Chairman.

2013. I thought that your main observation upon it was this: that so long as this employment was given by the Dock Company, there was a greater chance of continuity of employment for the individual labour?—Yes.

2014. Whereas, when it is in the hands of different shipowners, the man has to go from the one to the other perhaps, and may often fall out of employment between them?—Yes.

Mr. *Jackson.*

2015. I do not understand that the Dock Companies employed the men permanently before. The employment appears to be the same as regards men, although the employer is now the shipowner, whereas formerly it was the Dock Company?—The Dock Company has changed its tactics, so far as I can understand. A system of decasualisation, owing to representations that have

Mr. *Jackson*—continued.

have been made so often, has begun, and they employ more permanent men than they used to. They have permanent men:—"A," ticket men; "B," ticket, and so on. The Dock Company employ very few casuals indeed; but the shipowners employ casuals much as before. One only has to go to the south side of the Albert Dock any morning to see how many are employed; or, rather, how many fail to get employment.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

2016. Perhaps this would elucidate the point: Supposing the same amount of work to be done, that work is now spread over fewer men than formerly, because they are permanently employed, and not casually?—Exactly. That applies to the Dock Company. There are fewer men employed by the Dock Company than they used to employ.

Mr. *John Burns.*

2017. But they are employed regularly?—They are employed regularly.

Mr. *Mather.*

2018. Formerly they were casuals under the Dock Company?—Formerly, to a large extent, they were casuals under the Dock Company. The Dock Companies always have had a permanent staff, as far as possible, but still they employ more permanent men now than they used to.

2019. And the casuals are only employed when they require them?—Yes.

Mr. *Logan.*

2020. I suppose the same number of hours are worked that used to be worked?—Yes.

Chairman.

2021. Have you any other observation to make as to the trades—or the causes of non-employment in the trades—of West Ham. Questions will have to be asked you afterwards?—Yes, Sir, I think it will be better almost to put direct questions to me, or else I am likely to get confused.

2022. I am reading from *this* proof; you have exhausted that, but would you wish to volunteer any more information?—No, I do not wish to volunteer any more information.

2023. Passing to another subject, do you consider the Poor-law machinery capable of coping with all the distress (or with what proportion) of the unemployed who come to the parish for assistance?—Well, Sir, I do not consider that the Poor-law machinery is capable of coping with the distress we have had this winter in Canning Town. In fact, I consider it absolutely incapable. The stone-yard was crammed on certain occasions; the workhouse was full; when men went to the stone-yard they were turned away, and had to come at other times; they had to come the next day, or the following day; they could not get the relief. The Poor-law machinery was not sufficient to afford the relief, or to apply the usual tests.

2024. Was that the fault of the Poor-law system, or was it the fault of the Poor-law

Chairman—continued.

arrangements in the individual union of West Ham. For instance, with regard to pauper accommodation, we understand that the pauper accommodation is inadequate, and that that might be cured by the action of the board itself—action which the Central Local Government Board have urged them to take again and again. Then with regard to the stone-yard; they could have increased, or multiplied, stone-yards, could they not?—Yes, but even then I do not think that the Poor-law machinery does sufficiently cope with the existing evil; it copes with certain portions of the evil. If they had a larger number of stone-yards it would cope with that portion of the evil. All the men who are willing to work in stone-yards, willing to accept relief in that form and shape, could perhaps be accommodated and enabled to get the relief; but all the unemployed who ought to be helped in other ways are left untouched.

2025. That is the proper distinction, surely; we need not deal with the want of accommodation, because that can be met by the Poor-law authorities themselves; it is conceivable that it would be met. Then you say besides that, the Poor-law system does not touch the unemployed who ought to be relieved?—No, Sir; it does not give the relief that it should give to the honest unemployed working men, who are prepared to work, ready to work, and cannot get the work to do.

2026. Have they a great objection to associating themselves with Poor-law relief?—A very great objection indeed.

2027. Founded upon what, would you say?—Founded upon honest independent English feeling, I should say.

2028. And do you think that is largely associated with the question of Parliamentary disfranchisement?—I think that has a very important bearing, especially in our district, where men are accustomed to pride themselves on the fact that they exercise a vote.

2029. And disfranchisement operates, as it were, as a sign and seal of the Poor-law connection?—Yes.

2030. Can you give any suggestion as to what you think is the alteration or the modification of the Poor-law desired in that respect?—I think if the Poor-law is to be considered the responsible authority for dealing with men who are out of work some modifications (in view of next winter, at any rate) should be made. I think there ought to be power to dispense with the disfranchisement rule in the case of men of proved character, that during an exceptional period of hard frost, such as we have had this present winter, the rule should be suspended, and that all the men who have never applied for parish relief should be able to get relief, in any form or shape, such as the Poor-law authorities thought proper, without being disfranchised.

2031. Without a test?—I would have any test that was thought proper and advisable, although I must confess that I dislike the existing tests. If one could give a test that was less obnoxious than the stone-breaking or the oakum-picking it would be very much better, I think.

2032. No doubt; but can you suggest any other means of reaching the same end?—Not

Chairman—continued.

during a very hard frost; I must confess I could not.

2033. Do you consider that any action should be taken by the State, with a view to relieving distress caused from want of employment in various localities?—Yes, Sir; I do.

2034. Have you any suggestions to make on that head?—I think the State is responsible to a large extent for the existence of this National disease—for I call it a disease—the question of the unemployed. It is a National responsibility, which is put upon the State, just as we put the responsibility of educating children upon the State, and I think that the State should assist local authorities in coping with the evil. I do not think we should neglect local authorities, or work apart from local authorities; I think we should work in connection with them as closely as possible; but that the State should assist the local authorities in meeting the evil; and I should suggest, Sir, that the local authorities (the vestry or the council, as the case may be) should be compelled to keep a labour register of all the unemployed, and send in monthly returns.

Mr. *Jackson.*

2035. To whom?—To the Local Government Board; and when these returns reached a certain per centage which signified anything like acute distress—that is to say, as shown by the number of unemployed in proportion to the population—the State should subsidise the local authority, and —inspecting and watching the work—should see that they carried out what necessary and productive work there was to be done in the district. That is only one thing that I should suggest. There are many other things. I think, beyond providing work in the immediate locality, the State should assist local authorities—especially Boards of Guardians—to start farm colonies. West Ham would be an excellent district to make the experiment in, because we are close to Essex, and there is a lot of land in Essex that is going out of cultivation, and there are a lot of men in West Ham who are general labourers, and who are accustomed to work on the land. These farm colonies I should think advisable. I should suggest myself that they should be made almost self-supporting; that is to say, we should not compete in the open market with other trades, and that the physically incompetent men should be sent down there and trained under proper supervision. It is impossible to find work for them in our own localities, but they could be sent down to the farm colonies, and trained, and fed, and made fit to do useful work. In that way we should rid our districts of these men, who are only a burden upon the rates; and in the end we should save distinctly even so far as rates are concerned—apart from the fact that they would be doing useful, productive work in bringing the land again under cultivation. And so far as the "loafers" are concerned, I should commit them to the tender mercies of the Poor-law, and let the Poor-law deal as stringently as it liked with them.

Chairman.

2036. Of course, the land which is now out of cultivation has gone out of cultivation largely

Chairman—continued.

I suspect—in Essex especially—because it does not pay to cultivate it?—Yes, Sir, that is quite true. It would not do to grow corn, for example, for the open market; but these farm colonies would not be competing in the open market—they would grow sufficient corn to feed themselves and their poultry—they would grow fruit, and so on; they would develop all sorts of local industries in connection with such colonies.

2037. If the result of these industries were to be realised at all, they would, so far, compete with other producers?—Hardly, Sir; I do not see that.

2038. I mean this: If you sold your fruit, for instance, and I were a fruit-seller outside, I might complain, might I not?—I was anticipating that you would *not* sell your fruit, Sir.

2039. Oh, it is all to be consumed?—Yes, you would grow it for your own consumption.

Mr. *John Wilson* (Durham).

2040. Would you allow me to supplement that by asking where they would get their clothes and furniture from?—So far as possible, I would have those things made on the spot, too; I would decentralise.

2041. How would you avoid the necessity of an exchange for the wool and the wood?—A certain amount of it would have to be done, undoubtedly. I am not trying to work out a practicable scheme now, Sir; I am only suggesting. This is just a suggestion that I throw out.

Chairman.

2042. You think that a colony of that sort would be an outlet for a good deal of the unemployed labour in a place like West Ham, and that it should be worked without any attempt at a profit?—Yes, quite so.

2043. The loss (if any) would be borne by the locality, which would be assisted by a subsidy of the State, would it not?—Yes; and it would cost less than keeping these men, as they are kept at present.

2044. When you speak of a subsidy by the State, I presume you mean that the subsidy would not supersede the contribution of the locality?—No.

2045. And that it should be made dependent upon an equivalent contribution, or some arrangement of that sort?—Certainly; I think the locality ought to contribute—the locality ought to bear its share of the responsibility. May I give you some figures, Sir, with regard to our own district, as to the people who inhabit our district, as to whether they are really local people, or whether they come from outside?

2046. Yes.—There were 82,616 people born in West Ham, or Essex, according to the census of 1891. The county is taken—not West Ham only, West Ham being in Essex—63,331 were born in London, and 58,956 came from other parts of England, showing that an enormous proportion of those who live in West Ham are really not our people at all; and therefore we are not in that sense fully responsible for them.

2047. But you have got the benefit in their labour, industry, and enterprise, robbing other places of it?—Yes; but we also have the benefit of keeping them, if you can call it a "benefit."

Mr. *John Burns.*

2048. Do not they keep themselves?—I am afraid they do not; many of them do not.

2049. Is it not because of their producing too much that many of them are out of work?—I think it is because they do not consume enough.

2050. It may be a little of both, may it not?—Certainly.

Chairman.

2051. Have you any figures which show to what extent agricultural labourers have been drawn in from Essex?—I can only give my own opinion; I cannot give you any figures which could be proved and tested; perhaps they would not be of any value, therefore, representing only my own opinion.

Mr. *Round.*

2052. There are the census returns; perhaps you may have seen those. In the census returns between 1871 and 1881 20 per cent. is given as the diminution in the number of agricultural labourers in some counties?—Yes; I fancy we should have more than 20 per cent. of agricultural labourers—men who have been on the land—in West Ham.

Chairman.

2053. And who have come to you partly because of your superior attraction, and partly because they could not get on where they were?—Yes; because they could not get on where they were, I think is the real reason.

Mr. *Billson.*

2054. You mean 20 per cent. of the able-bodied men, do you not?—Twenty per cent. only of the general labourers.

Mr. *Logan.*

2055. You said 40 per cent.?—40 per cent. have either been on the land, or in connection with the land in some way or other.

Mr. *Lawrence.*

2056. But you cannot test that at all?—I cannot test that at all. I have made all sorts of enquiries, but I cannot test it. I have tried to test it by asking some thousands of men; that is all I could do.

Chairman.

2057. Have you any other suggestion to make as to what course should be adopted in West Ham to prevent the recurrence of distress and to put an end to the chronic want of employment?—I have other suggestions as to matters which I think the State could deal with, but I do not think the locality could deal with them. I think, for example, if the State were to adopt the idea of afforestation—afforestment, or whatever you call it—they could use a good many single men in planting trees and developing that industry.

2058. I think that is rather a large question, perhaps, for us to enter upon, but have you any experience as to the profitableness of planting trees, or do you know anything about that?—I have no experience; I can only say that experts declare that it is profitable.

Mr. *Jackson.*

2059. Have you ever seen a statement showing whether it was profitable in any particular case?—Yes.

2060. Will you put that statement in?—I shall be very glad to do so.

2061. I mean a statement of accounts; I do not mean a statement of an individual that, in his opinion, it would be profitable?—I can give you the statement of a man who is considered an expert upon the subject.

2062. That is not my point; it is a statement of accounts. I want to see where the work has been carried out and proved to be profitable?—It cannot be done in England, of course.

Mr. *David Randell.*

2063. Have you heard that experiments in afforestation in Wales have been successful?—I have not heard that; I am very glad to know it.

Chairman.

2064. I wish to get your suggestions before the Committee. Besides afforestation, is there anything else?—I think the reclamation of waste lands and foreshore works would be very useful.

2065. What are called "slob-lands"?—Yes, slob-lands. I do not think there could possibly be any harm in doing that; I think it would be a useful experiment. It would be employing men and doing useful work; there is no doubt about that.

2066. Can you give the Committee any information as to the effect on the men who were sent to the farm colony at Hadleigh by the West Ham guardians in conjunction with the West Ham Relief Fund?—Yes, Sir; I went down many times myself to see these men when they were working on the farm colony at Hadleigh. I am not, in any way, endorsing (this is the Salvation Army farm colony that we are speaking of) what General Booth does, except in so far as that it is a good thing to get men back on to the land. I do not approve of the single man, or barrack treatment of these men; I believe in taking *families* back on to the land, if you are going to take them at all. I do not agree with General Booth in the way in which he does it, but so far as regards putting the men back on to the land, my opinion is that it does them an immense amount of good. I went to see these men while they were working. I saw them all as they came home at various times, and about half of them did get back on to the land in some way or other; the other half returned to us.

2067. On neighbouring farms, or somehow or other?—Yes, somehow or other, down there in the immediate district. The other half returned to us.

Mr. *Lawrence.*

2068. How many altogether; 27, was it not?—Fourteen men were sent down at first.

Mr. *John Burns.*

2069. Did they displace other men at lower wages?—Do you mean when they went down?

2070. When they went on to the land?—Oh, no, I believe not.

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

2071. What proof have you as to that?—Well, I fancy that it is very unlikely that they would accept lower wages.

2072. They being single men could live on less than married men?—No doubt.

Chairman.

2073. Can you tell us what sort of men they were?—They were very poor men, indeed; they were, what I should call, physically incompetent men.

2074. And what had they been doing previously? — Stone-yard work, and practically nothing else.

Mr. *Mather.*

2075. Were they all men of your casual class?—Yes, casual men.

2076. Before they applied for relief?—Yes.

Chairman.

2077. And they were improved by their training there, you think?—Very much improved physically—very much—they were almost made into able-bodied men. Some of the weaklings were made into able-bodied men by sufficient food and fresh air.

2078. How long were they there? — They were there from three to four-and-a-half months.

Mr. *Bartley.*

2079. Has their history been traced since?—I am afraid not. I wish now that I had tried to trace them, and to keep the history of them; but I suppose I did not attach sufficient importance to it at the time.

Mr. *John Burns.*

2080. You do not think that they had the four months which enabled them to recover—as some of them did—and that then they went on a "burst" for a month on what they had earned?—I do not say there are not a great many who would do that; I think it is quite likely there are a great many who would; but, at the same time, I think if you can benefit a man physically you give him a better chance altogether for the rest of his life, and he is more likely not to go on a "burst," I should imagine.

Chairman.

2081. Will you say what your opinion is as to the payment of trades union wages in the case of the relief of the unemployed?—This is a very important point, as it seems to me. It was on this point that I differed from Mr. Hills this last winter, and refused to serve upon his committee, or to act as secretary again. I consider that the trades union rate of wages should be paid, even for relief work; and I should like to give you my opinions for coming to that conclusion, as it seems to some people an extraordinary conclusion. I consider that it is a very dangerous precedent for us to set, to tell town councils and local authorities that they can put off their ordinary work until certain times, and that that work shall be done at relief work rates. It is a temptation to any local authority to say: "Well, we will employ a large number of men at certain seasons of the year and call it relief work, and we will pay them 3*d.* an hour, or 4*d.* an hour, as the case may be," and I think it is a precedent that we ought to be very, very careful against setting; I believe that, indirectly, it would lower wages; and a man who believes in trades unions, as I do, would consider very, very carefully any step that he took before he lowered wages in that way, or did anything that was likely to lower wages, knowing how difficult it is for men to live at the present rate of wage.

Mr. *Jackson.*

2082. When you speak of lowering wages, I suppose you mean the rate of wages, not the number of shillings a man gets per week?—Lowering the rate, if you like.

Chairman.

2083. When you speak of the trades union rate of wages, you refer to the minimum trades union rate?—Yes. It is argued, sometimes, that the best work should be done in the summer, and that this work should not be put off to the winter, because you can do this work best in the summer. Any local authority might very well argue:—"Well, we will not put any work off to the winter; we can do it best in the summer; it can be done most cheaply in the summer; things are most fit for it at that time, and we can use our own men; we can use the men who we know are accustomed to this work." All I can say, if that argument is used, is that I do not think it will pay the community in the end. You will get a lower district rate, but you will get a higher poor rate; and I think what you want to do is to equalise it as far as possible over the whole community. If you put off some of your work to the winter, and do some of this work in the winter, even though you have to pay the trade union rate of wages and it costs more, at the same time you are lowering your poor rate and the charge is not so heavy, while the men are given work and they are not demoralised by the want of employment; so, on the whole, I think it is a gain to the district for the local authority to give work in the winter as far as possible. Then the work done under such circumstances is not necessarily below the value. It is always said to me that the work is below the market value—that the men do not really earn the market value of the work.

Mr. *Jackson.*

2084. It is above the market value, is it not—not below?—The work these unemployed men do is below the market value, it is said.

2085. But it cost more than the market value?—Yes, it costs more. Well, Sir, in answer to that, I say that the market price does not necessarily represent the value of the work done; more probably it represents the number of men seeking it, which in West Ham, at any rate, is a very important point. There are a huge number of men seeking for any job that is going—any piece of work that can be given the men seek for in crowds—hundreds and hundreds apply for it. You can go to any factory early in the morning and you will see men there waiting on the mere chance of getting a job. For one man's work there

Mr. *Jackson*—continued.

there will be a hundred men looking, and that shows that the market price does not depend upon the value of the work done, but upon the number of men looking for it, very frequently. Then, so long as the wages that are given do not exceed the real value of the work that is done—I lay stress upon the word "real," that is to say, the wealth produced—so long as the wages do not exceed the value of the wealth produced, then the higher they are the better it is for the community as a whole, since the money thus paid is chiefly spent in staple commodities and necessities, and therefore it is good for trade. I contend, Sir, that the higher the wages are, even for relief works, supposing that they do not exceed the real value of the work done—that is to say, the wealth produced—the better it is for the community as a whole.

Mr. *Lawrence.*

2086. Is painting done in the depth of winter equally as good as painting done in the proper season?—I should say that outside painting in the depth of winter would be a bad thing to do; inside, it would be a good thing to do. I am doing some painters' work now.

2087. Are you advising the committee to pay full value on outside painting, which you say is not good?—No; I should advise the committee not to have outside painting done in winter, especially in a hard frost. Then, Sir, there is one other point, if I may mention it. It seems rather impertinent on my part to detain the Committee in this way with my own views concerning the matter, but this is a point that is sure to come up in hundreds of ways. Mr. Hills is coming before you, and I would like you to have my views upon the subject, as Mr. Hills takes exactly the opposite view to that which I hold. If we do work, and the work done is found not equal to the real value, then I think we should remember that we are, avowedly, meeting exceptional cases. That is the whole object of this Committee; it is to discover how to meet exceptional distress. We are avowedly meeting exceptional cases of distress from want of employment, and the best way to perpetuate the inefficiency and the incompetence of any man is to pay him a small wage—which means insufficient food. Last winter I went over a large number of times to see the men who are employed on the Wanstead Flats, digging and doing other rough labour. Nearly all those men, so far as one could judge (and I believe any medical man would agree with me), were suffering from a want of food; some of the men could not work, and did not work, for several hours, and not until they had had something to eat. We sent them to the shelter where soup was provided, we gave them soup (gave them something to eat) before they could use a spade or a pick, and in two or three days we found that they improved wonderfully, and did much better work owing to that fact. We supplied them with a lot of food at cost price, and gave them shelter in very bad weather; and, as a matter of fact, most of the unemployed to-day, of the general labourer and the casual type, are suffering from either insufficient food or a wrong sort of food. I think that if you were

Mr. *Lawrence*—continued.

to give them proper food you would get what I may call their natural efficiency, which we do not get at present. There is one other point which I do not suppose would appeal to a great many people, but it does appeal very strongly to me, that is, that these unemployed men we are dealing with are not chess pawns; they are men, and we cannot deal with them as though they were inanimate objects. If we treat them well, the probability is that they will respond to the treatment, and that good treatment will call forth corresponding energy on their part. Mr. Hills will give you evidence to-morrow to prove to you that these men cannot earn, in some cases, a penny an hour—or will not earn it. I say that that 4*d.* an hour is largely responsible for that fact. I blame the men, who will not do their best, and condemn them; but, at the same time, I believe that many of these men would have worked much better if they had been paid 6*d.* an hour—much better.

Chairman.

2088. Well, I am sure the Committee are interested to hear what you say with so much sympathy, but does the broad fact not occur to you that if you pay these men a high wage you will induce a number of people to think that it is better to be unemployed than to be employed?—Well, Sir, we have safeguarded that.

2089. Is not that a danger, broadly speaking?—We pay just the trade union rate of wage, but we put this safeguard in, lest men should be drawn from other trades or from some permanent work:—We say, "We will only employ you a certain number of hours a day (a shorter day) and only so many days a week." All we did last winter was to pay a man 12*s.* a week. Now, what sensible man would leave a permanent job, even at 18*s.* or 19*s.* a week, which was regular, to do this hard labour in a bitter cold wind, exposed to the open air, for 12*s.* for one week?

Mr. *Whiteley.*

2090. May I ask you for what class of work this 6*d.* an hour was paid?—General labourers; for ordinary navvies work the rate is 6½*d.*

Chairman.

2091. In this district?—In this district 6*d.* an hour would be considered the rate for general labourers' work; for navvies work 6½*d.*

Mr. *Whiteley.*

2092. How many hours would they usually work?—I am not sure.

Mr. *Bartley.*

2093. I understood you were saying what a great advantage it was to get higher wages and more food, but it appears from your calculation that there is really less money at the end of the week than they would get at the lower rate of wages. How do you account for that?—I am only putting it like this: I think you should pay as much money as you possibly can for the work done, but as it is relief work you must safeguard yourself against the temptation which would be

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

put to these men to leave permanent jobs, and therefore you employ them a shorter number of hours and fewer days, so that there is no temptation to any man to leave a regular job to come to it.

Chairman.

2094. You recognise, not the full rate, but this minimum rate of wage as the remuneration to be given for the work?—That is my own honest conviction, Sir; I believe that it is the right thing to do.

Mr. *John Burns.*

2095. Do you know of any districts that have paid it?—West Ham.

2096. And others?—I think Poplar tried it.

2097. Battersea has tried it, has it not?—I am not sure.

Mr. *John Wilson* (Govan).

2098. I think you stated to us that you were convinced that the present exceptional season had a good deal to do with the distress in West Ham?—It has to do with all the exceptional distress which the building trades and the river-side occupations suffer.

2099. I think you stated that 40 per cent. of the labouring class that came into West Ham came in from the country districts?—I should think that there was 40 per cent. that either had been on the land or connected with the land in some way or other, probably from Essex.

2100. Do not you think that that 40 per cent. when once the weather is moderated will go back again to their employment in the country?—No, certainly not.

2101. You do not think it?—I am certain they will not.

2102. How will the land in the country get tilled if the labourers are not on the ground?—There is no work for them if they go back to the country.

2103. Then I take it that a great many of the trades, such as builders, bricklayers, carpenters, plasterers, gardeners, and these classes of workmen, will go back to their employment after the severity of the weather is over?—Yes, all the exceptional men.

2104. Which will be a great relief, will it not?—Yes.

2105. Because, excepting the labouring class, they are the great bulk of the artisans of the district?—It will be a very great relief indeed.

Mr. *John Wilson* (Govan)—continued.

2106. Is it your opinion that in times of exceptional distress from want of employment the guardians should be empowered to give relief as they think fit—either in money or food—without disfranchisement?—In exceptional weather, like the weather we have had recently, I think they should do so.

2107. Do you think that the financial ability of West Ham—so far as the rateable property is concerned—has been exhausted in finding the necessary relief for the unemployed?—The rateable value of the West Ham Union has not been exhausted in finding parish relief for those who have come upon the parish; but the rateable value of the West Ham Union, and the rateable value of West Ham, are two different things, and I am perfectly certain that if West Ham has to meet the whole of the unemployed question itself, it will not only have reached the limit, but gone far beyond it in dealing with the matter.

2108. Perhaps it might not meet it for all the year round—for the number of unemployed there are at the present time—but of course the present number of the unemployed will be very largely diminished very shortly?—Yes; but we always have a large number of unemployed, even in summer, in West Ham.

2109. Then do you think it would be right to ask for an Imperial grant for West Ham, or any particular part of the United Kingdom, if other parts did not get the same thing?—I think, Sir, that my own test in that case would be sufficient—that is, that if there was exceptional distress the compulsory returns on your labour register would show what the exceptional distress was, the percentage of unemployed in all districts, and I think that not only West Ham, but any district that had to contend with these huge difficulties should be assisted.

2110. But supposing these districts were able to cope with their own unemployed, would not you regard it as hard that an Imperial grant should be given to any particular place?—If the locality is capable of coping with its unemployed, then I do not see that it needs any Imperial grant at all.

2111. But do not you think it would be giving money to one portion of the people for the purpose of doing that which another portion were disposed to do for themselves?—I think that would be a very selfish view, Sir; the community ought to bear the burden.

2112. It is a very selfish world all-round, is it not?—No doubt it is.

Thursday, 28th February 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Acland.
Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. Billson.
Mr. Bousfield.
Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Mather.
Mr. David Randell
Mr. Renshaw
Mr. Whiteley.
Mr. John Wilson (Durham).
Mr. John Wilson (Govan).
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. PERCY ALDEN, M.A., re-called; and further Examined.

Mr. *Mather.*

2113. REFERRING to your evidence on the question of the census of West Ham borough which you took, or which you knew was taken fairly accurately as you think, must the Committee understand that the whole of the 10,000 persons reported "unemployed" were in need of relief or in distress?—I should not say the whole of the 10,000 out of work were absolutely in dire distress or in destitution.

2114. Can you give us any idea of the proportion of the 10,000 who would be considered as skilled workmen who were out of work for a time only and in the meanwhile were spending their savings, or getting help from their friends, and who would not like it to be supposed that they were in distress or in dire want?—I should think about 50 per cent. of the skilled men.

2115. And the number of skilled men you estimated by your census at something like 2,000 out of the total 10,000?—Yes.

2116. Out of those 2,000 you would say 1,000 were persons not needing relief?—I do not say that; I say they would not be in dire distress and destitution.

2117. Would they be persons who would be likely under any circumstances to apply for relief, even if the means which you suggested in your evidence were at hand?—They would apply for relief immediately if they could get it in the shape of work, but they would not be the sort of persons to go to the parish to get relief.

2118. You think the whole of the 10,000 reported as "unemployed" would immediately apply for relief if the relief were afforded in the form of work for their own hands?—Yes. I do not say they would take any kind of work necessarily, because some of them would not be prepared to undertake the rougher kind of work, which would unfit them for their more skilled work.

2119. Living, as you have done for four years, in West Ham, I presume you would say that at all times there are skilled men who are fully employed for some months together, and then for a number of weeks, it may be, are out of work. You would not class that sort of workman with these 10,000 "unemployed"?—No; if they were only out of work for a few weeks in the whole year we should drop them out of consideration altogether.

Mr. *Mather*—continued.

2120. You did not drop them out in taking your census, did you?—Certainly not.

2121. You simply went from house to house, and asked to know the number of unemployed on that particular day?—Yes.

2122. May we take it that the 10,000 is the very outside figure, so far as it is any indication of the number of men in dire distress?—Of the men in destitution it is; but not, of course, of the women and children as well.

2123. This figure, I understand, also includes boys and girls over 15 years of age; it includes the portion of the population able to work, over the school age?—It is those over 16 years of age, I think.

2124. Therefore, it includes all young persons out of work, as well as men and women?—Yes.

Mr. *Bartley.*

2125. I thought it was over 11 years old?—They have been struck out of the main account. Boys and girls and women are not included, but young men of about 17 or 18 are included.

Chairman.

2126. Women are included in the figure of 10,000, are they not; because you struck off 1,000, and said there were 9,000 men?—Yes.

Mr. *Mather.*

2127. The 10,131 out of work, I understand, comprises all persons over 16 years of age of both sexes?—It does not comprise all of them, because, making the census, in many cases those

Mr. *Mather*—continued.

who were canvassing thought it was not worth while taking account of those who were quite young, and had no one dependent upon them.

2128. Do you mean by "quite young," persons of 16 years of age?—Yes; it does not include all of them.

2129. But does it include a large number?—A proportion of them.

2130. May I take it that it represents those that were in work, or ought to be in work?—Those that ought to be in work.

2131. May we take it that these young persons of 16, who had begun to earn a livelihood for themselves, being out of work on the day the census was taken were included in the 10,000?—Not all of them; not more than half of them, I should say; because nearly all the canvassers dropped them immediately, and saw that the important point was to get the adult male workers.

2132. Have you any knowledge as to whether, in the borough and district of West Ham, savings banks are very much availed of by the working people?—I could not say to what extent they are availed of all over the borough. I know a good many.

2133. Would you take the working population of West Ham on the whole, so far as the skilled population is concerned, as being thrifty and fairly provident as compared with any other district?—I should say quite as much so as compared with any other district.

2134. Therefore there would be a certain amount of saving of money in the case of those who are in full work?—Certainly.

2135. Those savings would, I presume, diminish in times of great distress, such as we have passed through; they would be used, in the first place, by those who did not like to come for charitable relief?—Quite so.

2136. You spoke yesterday, I think, a little vaguely in answer to the Chairman's question as to whether the Poor-law authorities could not deal with the description of poverty which you described in West Ham apart from that amongst skilled workmen who had never yet applied for public relief; would you repeat what you then said to this extent, that you think the Poor-law guardians of West Ham have no power to deal wholly and completely at the present time with the relief to casuals, to unskilled labourers, and to the lower class of labourers?—I think they have no power to deal with it satisfactorily.

2137. Do you mean satisfactorily according to your opinion, or satisfactorily according to the opinion of the men and women who require relief?—Satisfactorily according to my own opinion, and satisfactorily also according to the opinion of a very large proportion of the men themselves.

2138. Do you regard the stone-yard test, to which you referred yesterday, as an ignominious occupation?—I consider it by no means a perfect test.

2139. We have nothing perfect in this world, and certainly not in the present state of society; but, taking all the circumstances of the people into consideration, and the difficulty of the public authorities to deal with this question of exceptional distress when it suddenly arises, do you think that the labour test in the stone-yard, supposing it to be extended to any magnitude, would be incompatible with the necessities of the case, and with due respect to the people?—I do consider it ignominious and degrading.

2140. Therefore, when you said there was no accommodation in the stone-yard, you meant that it was not desirable to increase that accommodation on the part of the guardians?—They were not prepared for it.

2141. It does not require much preparation to break stones, does it?—They were not prepared to receive the huge number of men who applied for work, and they had to turn them away.

2142. That rather admits the view which the Chairman put to you yesterday, that the Poor-law guardians were simply behind time and were not up to date in their arrangements, but there was nothing in the state of the law to prevent them from providing such work?—That is so; but my answer referred to another point. They would have been capable of coping with the men who applied at the stone-yard if they had taken the matter in time. They could have opened a new stone-yard; but what I meant was they had no power to cope with the large number of men who were not willing to receive relief from the parish which would have disfranchised them as the result.

2143. I was speaking with regard to the lower class of labourers and the casuals who would be willing to receive relief in the pauperising sense. For that class of men who were willing to work in the stone-yard there was no excuse for the guardians not having a stone-yard ready for them when it was required?—No.

2144. I think that was what the Chairman tried to elicit, and I wanted to get it clear. Therefore the fault lies with the Board of Guardians, so far as that particular case goes. Now, to take another class—that for which you seem to have the most concern, not that you do not concern yourself about the others, but you seem to think that the greater problem is the relief of men in the respectable working class who have been a long time out of occupation, and who would not, under any circumstances, go to the guardians to get ordinary pauper relief; for that class you have nothing suggested at all by the public authorities at West Ham at the present time?—Nothing that I can see at all.

2145. But the experiment that you made on the Hadleigh Farm with the 27 men, I understood, indicated to you that a large, well conceived and well carried out plan for the absorption of considerable numbers of these persons, something like the Hadleigh Farm arrangement, might contain in it a possible solution of a part of that question, at any rate?—Yes; I think if you can bring the men and the land into connection and touch that may be so.

2146. You spoke of some indoor occupation on the part of these men at Hadleigh Farm, or some other such farm, or occupation not of an agricultural character, which might be carried on in bad, or wet, or frosty weather. Had you in your mind any kind of trade or handicraft which such men could follow that would not lead to competition with men in ordinary employment?—No, I have no such trades in my mind at all. If you have

Mr. *Mather*—continued.

have any trade and make things, and put them on the open market, you would compete; but I should put them to work at all sorts of industries, and not put the goods on the open market.

2147. Judging from what you have seen in your experience, and from what you have heard, do you think it possible, by selecting the men with some amount of discrimination, to occupy them on the farm, on land, for the most part of the time, and that when they could not be occupied on the land, there might be some occupations found for them in the cottages, or on open spaces, without working on the land?—Yes, I think it would be possible to develop other industries in connection with the farm.

2148. Did the guardians pay any sum of money to the Hadleigh Farm in connection with those 27 men?—Yes; the guardians paid 2*s.* 6*d.* per week, and the West Ham Relief Fund another 2*s.* 6*d.* per week.

2149. That was about equivalent, I presume, to what the guardians would have given in the form of relief in any other way, supposing they were relieving in the locality?—It is rather less.

2150. So that the subsidy for each man to that extent did not cost the guardians quite as much as it would have cost to keep those people in the borough breaking stones or doing anything in the parish?—If they were taken into the workhouse it would cost more than 5*s.*

2151. Would you deprecate any help from the State, in the shape of gifts of money through the local authorities, to persons of this skilled labour class applying for work who were not subjected to this stone-yard test, or any other test of labour?—I think it would depend upon the circumstances.

2152. Do you mean that men of the class you have named (these skilled workmen) would receive gifts of money from any source whatsoever without having to render something for it?—I think many of them would be unwilling to; but in this case I think they would consider it a right, as I consider it a right.

2153. They would consider it a right, on what ground?—On the ground that they cannot possibly get work, and that they must live.

2154. Therefore, if work were provided of a kind which did not pauperise and did not degrade in any sense of the word, but might be called useful productive work, you think in every case these unemployed persons of the working class would apply for the work, and only take the money for the work they produced?—I believe the majority of them would take the work, and do it gladly.

2155. You think that they would rather take the relief in the form of work for which they were paid than have any taint of charity about the relief that they received?—My experience is that they would much rather do so.

2156. Therefore, if the State or the local authority were able to provide some means by which this unemployed class could be taken from time to time temporarily from their ordinary occupations when there was no work doing there, and put to work to enable them to earn something, that would be largely a solution of the difficulty so far as the working classes are concerned?—Yes.

Mr. *Mather*—continued.

2157. In relation to that working man class you would not, I presume, apply the principle which you advocated yesterday of making the wages paid to such persons what you call trade union wages?—Certainly. I hold the same position that I did yesterday on the subject.

2158. How would you treat a case of this kind: Take a mechanic whose trade union wages in the North of England are 34*s.* a week as a minimum, and here they are about 38*s.* a week; in offering him any relief work of that kind he could not be, of course, put to work upon mechanical contrivances such as he is accustomed to in the workshops, but he would be put to another kind of work for which he might be fit, say, on the land; would you contend that that man working on the land is to receive trade union wages at the rate of 34*s.* or 38*s.* a week?—No; the trade union wages for work upon the land; he would be paid the trade union rate of wages for that kind of work upon which he was employed.

2159. You would regard him for the time being as a member of the trades union of persons working on the land?—Yes.

Chairman.

2160. You do not mean that the man should continue to receive the trade union rate which he would receive when employed at his trade, but that he should receive the rate of wages for the kind of work that he was actually employed upon?—Yes.

Mr. *Bousfield.*

2161. Though he might not be fitted to do it.

Mr. *Logan.*

2162. If, for instance, a North country fitter comes to do navvy work, he would get 6½*d.* an hour?—Yes.

Mr. *Mather.*

2163. In the case of agricultural labourers, where there would be no trade union rate at all, you would deal with them upon the agricultural scale?—If an agricultural labourer came into the town and came to work on Wanstead Flats I should pay him 6*d.* an hour, which is the trade union rate of wages.

2164. Whatever the occupation was to which you put the mechanic, the mechanic would have to be satisfied with the rate of wages that that particular occupation received throughout the Kingdom or the particular district?—Yes, I should try to find him his own work, if possible. If I could not find him his own work, as an alternative I should give him any kind of work that could be got.

Mr. *Renshaw.*

2165. Practically, on this point of the trades union rate of wages it would amount to this, would it not—that the trade unions would fix the rate of wages to be paid, and if sufficient work was not found in the locality for those resident in the locality at that rate of wages, in your opinion it would become the duty of the State to provide work at rates fixed by the trade union

Mr. *Renshaw*—continued.

union for those who could not find work in the open market?—Yes.

2166. So that you would hold the State responsible for finding work at rates in the fixing of which the State had no voice whatever?—I understand the honourable Member to mean by the State the Government in this case.

2167. Precisely. Because I understand that part of this money is to come from the Government according to your scheme?—Yes, I do consider so. Organised labour fixes a minimum wage, and the State, like everybody else, must be prepared to pay that rate; in fact, the State is doing it in a great many directions.

2168. Is there not this difference in this case: You propose to lay upon the State the responsibility of finding work that does not exist in the locality; the State is to have no voice as to the rate of wages at which this work is to be remunerated, but it is to be fixed by an independent body, the trades unions, who would have no responsibility whatever for finding the money to pay the wages?—I do not say that the State would agree to pay it, but I should like the State to agree to.

2169. You gave us some evidence yesterday in regard to farm colonies; could you mention, from your own knowledge and experience, any successful experiments that have been carried out in that direction which would lead you to think the State would be warranted in supplementing local expenditure upon experiments of that kind?—I think most of the experiments that have been made have only been partially successful. The reasons for their want of success are so numerous that it would take a very long time to enter into them, but I do think they warrant us in supposing that if we carefully planned the experiments, and those experiments were under the supervision of the State, and conducted on wise lines, they might prove a success, not in the way of proving profitable experiments actually paying a profit, but in employing men who are at present out of work, and becoming demoralised as a consequence; and, at the same time, in reducing the tremendous expenditure which devolves upon the rates, owing to the fact of those men becoming a charge upon the rates.

2170. Speaking from your experience or any information that has reached you, you would not wish the Committee to suppose that you believe that that work would be really reproductive work?—I believe that in a few years it would become entirely self-supporting, but that you could not possibly expect it for the first few years, and that the State would have to take that into account.

2171. Do you consider that experiments of that kind, carried out at a certain loss, might be carried out in all parts of the country?—Yes, and they would be a real gain to the community, although carried on at a certain definite loss on each farm to start with.

2172. With regard to the question of afforesting, which you also suggested as an alternative means of employment, you said you might be able to give us some information bearing upon an experiment that had been carried out profitably, can you give us that information to-day?—I meant that I could have given some information with regard to what experts say in relation to that matter, but I have no evidence that I could give myself of any successful experiment of the kind. There has been a good deal of information produced. I believe the "Daily Chronicle" has published two or three very long articles on the subject; the information is get-at-able, I believe.

2173. Practically, you would suggest that the State should acquire land for the purpose of afforesting?—I believe they have lands available for the purpose. I believe the Crown lands in many cases would be suitable.

2174. Have you any idea of the amount of labour that could be employed upon any Crown lands that might be afforested?—I have no definite information. I should say many thousands of men might be employed on Crown lands in that way.

2175. Do you say that having regard to the fact that after you have planted the trees for a considerable number of years, six or eight years, varying, of course, with the soil, there is no labour whatever in connection with the matter until the thinning begins?—I should have thought there was some labour, but as to that, of course, I am not sure.

2176. Then in regard to the reclamation of waste land, which was the third instance that you gave us of work that might be undertaken in this direction, I should like to ask you whether your attention has been directed to experiments, or I might say more than experiments, carried out in Ireland with regard to the reclamation of slob lands?—No.

2177. Have you any information as to the amount of money expended in Ireland in that way, and the amount ultimately realised by the State?—No, I have no information at all upon the subject.

Mr. *Whiteley.*

2178. With regard to your opinion that the powers of the guardians are not sufficient to deal with distress, wherein are they insufficient; what do they lack?—I think they lack power to give relief without disfranchising, for one thing.

2179. If they were to obtain the power in circumstances of exceptional distress to give relief without disfranchisement, would you think they had every ability and power that was necessary?—Not to deal with the unemployed.

2180. But to deal with distress?—I do not say they would have every power to deal with exceptional distress.

2181. What power would you suggest they should obtain?—I should certainly suggest that they should obtain more power in the direction of acquiring land. At present they have practically no power, so far as I can see. They have to work on certain definite lines, and they have no power of going outside. I should like to see them have power to acquire lands near their parishes, and use the men in digging on that land whenever it was possible, instead of applying the stone-yard test.

2182. With regard to your farm colony, you contemplate that it should be self-contained practically?—Yes, so far as possible.

2183. What sort of workers are you going to have upon that colony; all kinds of men?—I should think all kinds would be needed, though, of

Mr. *Whiteley*—continued.

of course, the great majority would be labourers.

2184. There would be young and old men, vigorous men, and decrepit men—all sorts and conditions of men; is not that so?—It would all depend upon the men who were selected. You are not bound to select the old and decrepit men; you might pension them.

2185. At any rate, in a self-contained colony, where in all probability no money will pass, those who are able-bodied and vigorous will practically have to keep all those who are inclined to be idle or unable to do as full a day's work as those who are vigorous?—They would not have to keep those who were inclined to be idle, because you could immediately treat them summarily and dismiss them from the farm, or tell them to apply to the Poor-law authorities.

2186. Still, they would work under unfair conditions so long as the various capabilities of the workers were different, would they not?—I do not see that they would at all; they would each do as much as they could possibly do if they were honest men, and the State or local authority would guarantee them their support for having done their duty.

2187. You are supposing an ideal state, in which every man should do his best, whether he was paid for it or not?—I am supposing a farm colony or settlement in which you attempt to make every man do his best, and in which he is more likely to do his best than he is under the present circumstances.

2188. I suppose they would require cotton goods and coal, and a vast number of products which were not manufactured on the colony; where are they to get them from if they are not to sell their produce?—That is just where the assistance of the State would be most valuable.

2189. As a matter of fact, in order to procure outside products and materials which are not found upon the colony and are not manufactured by the men there, they would have to dispose of a good deal of their produce, would they not?—They would not necessarily dispose of their produce, but they would have to bring in something from the outside.

2190. They cannot bring in something from the outside unless they spend something from the inside, can they?—The State, on its own account, could bring in anything it required.

2191. Who is to pay for it, the Treasury?—This is all on the assumption that the State or the Treasury does pay something.

2192. With regard to your labourers' rate of 6*d.* an hour, for what class of labour is that 6*d.* an hour, the Trades Union rate of wages?—Ordinary general labourers.

2193. Does that only obtain in London, or does it elsewhere?—It obtains in London certainly, and in the districts round London that are not London proper.

2194. As a matter of fact, the ordinary rate of wages for labourers in Lancashire is about 1*l.* or 22*s.* a week, or 4½*d.* to 5*d.* an hour; is not that so?—I believe that is so.

2195. These men would have to work ordinarily upon the land?—Yes.

2196. Are you aware that the wages for labourers upon the land are from 13*s.* to 15*s.* a week in the rural districts?—Yes.

Mr. *Whiteley*—continued.

2197. Therefore your men, if paid at 6*d.* an hour, would receive 28*s.* or 29*s.* a week for doing the same work that is paid for at the rate of 13*s.* or 15*s.* a week in the farming districts of the country?—I am not proposing that at all. I do not propose that you should pay the trades union rate of wages for labourers in the town to the men whom you settle on the farm colony; in fact, I am not proposing that you should pay any wages at all in the colony, but simply that you should keep them and see that they do not starve.

2198. I am speaking of the wages which you have been paying for the last few weeks of 6*d.* an hour—I understood that was for labourers?—Yes; but those men are working in the town.

Chairman.

2199. And they are not employed for the full number of hours in the week?—No.

Mr. *Bartley.*

2200. You said, in answer to Question 1999, that you "believe there were 7,000 unemployed men in South West Ham before the frost set in"—that, I understand, is correct?—Yes, I believe that to be correct.

2201. About the 20th of January, when this census was taken, the number had increased to 9,000; is that so?—Yes.

2202. I understand from you that the occupations in West Ham are, to a large extent, dependent upon the weather?—If I may go back one moment, I do not think I said there were 7,000 in West Ham out of work previous to the frost. I think I said there were 7,000 unemployed in South West Ham when the frost had set in.

2203. Question 1999 was: "Do you consider that the unemployed that were shown in this census were men unemployed independently altogether of the frost," and you replied, "Certainly. I believe there were 7,000 unemployed men in South West Ham before the frost set in"; do you wish to correct that answer?—I did not know that I had said that; roughly speaking, I should say there were about 7,000. I thought it was referring to the number of men in South West Ham after the frost had set in, which would be about 7,000.

2204. Considering the nature of a great part of the work in West Ham, must there not always be some proportion of the population out of work during the winter months?—I think, under present circumstances, there are sure to be a considerable number of men out of work.

2205. Can you conceive any circumstances in which there would not always be a certain number of men out of work in the winter months?—If the winter is an exceptionally hard winter, I think it would be so.

2206. I wish to confine it to an ordinary winter. Is it not necessarily the case that in trades such as you have at West Ham there must always be a larger amount of work in the summer than in the winter?—Yes; a certain number of men would be cut of work in winter.

2207. A certain portion we must expect to be out; you would not consider that as really an indication of excessive distress?—No, I should

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

not attribute excessive distress to the season's trade except in this particular winter.

2208. You think there is no exceptional distress except from the specially bad weather which we have had lately?—I think so, certainly.

2209. You think there is?—Yes; but that is not in connection with the season's trade so much as in other directions.

2210. Do you think that 7,000 out of a population which we are told numbers about 250,000 is a very large number to be disturbed in their work by the winter, and a large number of whom depend, as you say, upon the weather for their employment?—Oh! all those 7,000 men were not thrown out of work by the winter; it was not due to the season's trade that they were out of work; they were out of work—a great many of them—irrespective of that.

2211. Chronically out of work?—7,000 out of employment in the summer.

2212. Have you any census of them?—I have no census of them; I can only go by having checked certain areas—certain streets.

2213. Does not your population increase very rapidly every year?—It does; yes.

2214. Then why does it increase if a large number are out of work? What attracts the people to the place?—Simply the fact that they cannot get work elsewhere, and they come up in the hope of getting work in London. Many men come up without the slightest idea of where they are going to get it, or how, but simply in the hope that they may get it.

2215. Is the number increasing, year by year, that is out of work?—I think so.

2216. You "think so," but you have no statistical evidence to prove it?—I have no statistical evidence, but I have a very firm conviction that if a census were made two summers consecutively you would find a larger number in the second summer than in the first.

2217. But you have only estimated that?—I have only estimated the number out of work in the summer.

2218. What relief do they get at the stone-yard?—They get relief partly in money and partly in kind.

2219. Do you know how much?—It is proportioned to the number of the family; I think for a man and his wife it is 8*d.* and a loaf for a day.

2220. That is not in the form of wages?—No, not in the form of wages.

2221. You say so many object to being disfranchised; can you tell me, or have you any idea at all, how many of those 7,000 who have applied for Poor-law relief have votes?—I did not say that 7,000 had applied for Poor-law relief.

2222. A large number, you said, had applied?—A large number, yes.

2223. Can you give any idea as to how many of those who have applied had votes?—I think the only way to give you any idea of the number who have votes and who do not want to lose them would be to give you my own experience during this relief work. I could not give you the experience of the Poor-law officials, because it is not mine. I could not give you the numbers.

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

2224. You have not made any effort to find out how many have been prevented receiving relief because they have votes and would lose them if they did receive Poor-law relief. You have no statistical evidence, I think, as to that?—Yes, I have some statistical evidence, although I could not give it you for the whole borough. This last winter I have helped 795 people once; 484 people twice; 226 people three times; 94 people four times; 33 people five times; and two people six times during this severe weather.

2225. Do you know that all those had votes?—I know that the great majority of them had votes, because I put down opposite every name where they were receiving anything in the form of parish relief; and the only people who were receiving parish relief, out of those assisted were 67 widows, 68 men who worked in the stone-yard, 46 men who had met with accidents or were cripples, or were maimed, and 12 very old men who were unable to work; those were the only men or women receiving any form of parish relief.

Mr. *Bousfield.*

2226. But you have not answered the question how many voters you estimate there were out of the 700 or 800?—The probability is that most of the men had votes, if they had not before received parish relief.

Mr. *Bartley.*

2227. But you cannot say distinctly that you have any statistical information as to the number of men who have been prevented applying for relief because they were afraid of losing their votes; it is your opinion?—It is my opinion that a very large number were prevented.

Chairman.

2228. Did they express themselves to that effect to you?—They did, distinctly; they came to me, because they would not go to the stone yard to be disfranchised.

Mr. *Bartley.*

2229. Then, in your answer to Question 2034, you say: "I think the State is responsible to a large extent for the existence of this national disease—for I call it a disease—the question of the unemployed." I should like to ask you in what way the State is responsible for the unemployed, in your opinion?—Well, Sir, the State is a unit; we are a community, responsible for the individual members of the community. I have never yet heard the theory put forward that the community was not responsible for the individual members of it.

2230. For their employment?—For their well-being.

2231. That is not their employment quite, is it?—Well, if they do not have employment they cannot be healthy and well; I consider that it is necessary for a man to work.

2232. Suppose the want of work depends upon a strike—I do not mean the individual striker, but if a strike occurs in any one trade other trades are affected by it—is the State responsible for that want of work?—That is quite a different thing.

2233. Is

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

2233. Is not that a very large part very often of the cause of the want of employment?—I do not think it has affected the large number of unemployed this winter.

2234. Do not you think in many cases it has led to a depression of trade, and is not that one cause certainly of the want of employment in many parts; has it not been so?—No, Sir; I think that the strike is very often used as a sort of bugbear in relation to driving trade away from different parts; but I do not think myself that it has any very great effect.

2235. Then concerning these farm colonies, you say they ought to be made self-supporting, and that the physically weak should be engaged upon them; do I understand that?—I think it would be a very wise thing on the part of the municipality or the community generally to get the physically incompetent back on to the land, in order that they might get the benefit of fresh air and better conditions.

2236. Do you think it is possible to make them self-supporting?—I think it is; I think in the end it is.

2237. The experiment you tried, or that was tried as far as I understand, of 5*s.* per man was paid to the colony, was it not?—Yes.

2238. In spite of that the colony could not be continued, do I understand that?—Oh, no; the Hadleigh Farm colony still exists, only when we ceased our 5*s.* payment their responsibility for the men ceased; and it was an experiment for three months.

2239. In spite of the 5*s.*, it did not pay to take them; they could not earn enough to support themselves?—That would be a matter for the head of the farm colony to answer; I do not quite know whether he found them a loss or not.

2240. Anyhow, your union did not think it successful—or did not continue it?—We did not continue it, because the Local Government Board only gave us powers for three months to keep them there.

2241. I should like to ask you one or two more questions on the subject of the trade union wages. You say that employment ought to be found for all who are out of work, in some way or other; have you ever heard of this experiment being tried in this country, or any other, of finding work for the unemployed?—Do you mean on the land?

2242. No, any way?—Oh, yes; of course I have heard of various experiments.

2243. Do you know that it was tried in Paris?—Certainly, in 1848.

2244. Do you know that the principle there was to guarantee work to every citizen?—Yes.

2245. Do you know the result of that experiment?—Yes.

2246. Was it not this—that on February 28th there were about 8,000 men out of work? Do you remember that?—Yes.

2247. And did not the number, by June, increase to 115,000?—Yes.

2248. And had not it, on the 28th June, to be given up altogether as fatal?—Yes.

2249. Was it not reported that distress increased immensely in Paris in consequence?—It was reported so.

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

2250. Have you any reason to suppose that that report was not correct?—I should consider that it is very likely that the report was exaggerated, under those circumstances.

2251. But the figures as to the number of men to whom the employment was given were statistical proof of that fact, were they not?—I believe so.

2252. Then, do you think that it is encouraging to us to commence a system of finding relief for everybody when that one great experiment which was tried in Paris as recently as 1848 led to the number out of work increasing in four months from 8,000 to 115,000?—I consider that it is just as well to go on and make experiments, but to make them under better conditions than those under which that experiment was made, and under different conditions entirely.

2253. Then you wish to continue some such experiment as that?—I should certainly not begin by that experiment—that is, by employing men in the town, and giving them work in the town.

2254. You wish to send them out of the town?—The first experiment that should be made should be to get men back on to the land—that is my opinion.

2255. I thought you said just now that as regards any artisan or any worker you would give him by preference that work which was his usual avocation?—If you could give it to him.

2256. If that were the case, would it not be absolutely necessary to give a great number of persons the same sort of work as that which they had been engaged upon all their lives?—It would be better to give a man *any* work rather than leave him unemployed.

2257. Was not that the experiment in Paris?—That was the experiment in Paris.

2258. The experiment that led to those disastrous results?—I do not say that the giving of them the work led to the disastrous results; I say it was given under bad and false conditions.

2259. You think that to make every mechanic an independent farm labourer is the solution of this problem?—No, I do not. If you can get the mechanic on to the farm colony, and let him do the mechanical work of the farm colony, you will have done a good thing for him.

2260. Do you think that the mechanic who has been getting 9*d.* or 10*d.* an hour will be satisfied by being put on to the land at even 6*d.* an hour?—A mechanic who has been starving for six months of the year will be quite glad or quite willing to accept the offer of the municipality that he and his wife and children shall be kept in security.

2261. At the lower wage?—It would not be any wage at all, as far as I can see.

2262. Would it not be practically a lower wage?—I do not think it would be at all. If the man only earns wages during six months in the year, and you can guarantee him plenty of food, plenty of clothing, and every comfort, it would not be a lower wage.

2263. Then you think that if a man is out of work he would be willing to take less than he would otherwise be prepared to take?—A man got up in a meeting the other day which I attended, and he said his wages were about

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

26*s.* a week when he was working: "I will go back to the land to-day for 12*s.* a week."

2264. You think many would do that?—I think a great many would do it, if you could promise them that the life which they live in the country should be lived under somewhat more favourable conditions than those under which the average agricultural labourer to-day has to live.

2265. But in that employment that was suggested in West Ham at 4*d.* an hour, was not some of that on the land?—Yes; but it was not on the land in the sense in which I mean "on the land."

2266. They refused that, did not they?—Oh, no.

2267. I thought they refused it?—There were plenty of men to do it.

2268. But the Corporation refused it?—The Corporation refused it; but there are plenty of men who are willing to do even that. I believe there are men who would be willing to work for 2*d.* or 3*d.* an hour.

2269. Then in respect to this experiment in Paris, and elsewhere, you wish to see some such experiment tried as that; that the State should provide work for all the unemployed?—Yes, Sir; wisely and guardedly I should like to see the State make an experiment in this direction.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

2270. How long have you been working at Mansfield House in Canning Town?—Four years and about six months.

2271. When you first came there, I presume, work was better in the Thames Shipbuilding Yard than it is now?—Yes, far better. The iron works were very busy when I first went to Canning Town.

2272. And from then until now you have been actively working amongst the poor in the different parts of the borough?—Yes.

2273. And with the exception of an occasional very brief holiday, the work has been continuous?—Yes.

2274. During the whole of those four years have you ever known a period, summer or winter, good trade or bad trade, when there was not a surplus population in the labour market of West Ham?—Never.

2275. I suppose a good many of the men worked at the Beckton Gas Works when you first came?—A very large number indeed.

2276. These gas works are busier in the winter than they are in the summer, necessarily?—Yes.

2277. The docks, on the other hand, I suppose, are slacker in the winter than in the summer?—Yes, always.

2278. And would you say that the increase of labour at the gas works should to some appreciable extent counterbalance the slackness of work about the docks?—Yes, certainly.

2279. So that the season's displacement of labour is not so great owing to the fortunate circumstance that we have those large gas works in the neighbourhood?—It certainly does lighten the burden considerably.

2280. At the present moment—when the frost has gone—do you think it possible for the Corporation, by any work they could undertake, to

Mr. *Keir-Hardie*—continued.

employ the surplus population?—Certainly not. The Corporation, I should say, could employ—if they put on every bit of work that it is possible to do (the borough engineer could tell you more accurately, I should say)—not more than about 1,500 men.

2281. A good deal of the work done about the docks is casual work?—A very great deal of it.

2282. Have you any experience of the effects upon character of casual and intermittent work?—I have known agricultural labourers come up to Canning Town as steady, honest workmen accustomed to do regular work all their lives; they have settled down as casual labourers, and have become demoralised and degraded in consequence, and I have seen the demoralization go on myself.

2283. So that if a scheme could be devised whereby the casual labourer could be kept constantly at work the effect on the individual would be good?—Certainly.

2284. May I ask you whether it is the case that most of those casuals are in a state of chronic poverty even when finding employment, and when dull trade comes are the first to come upon the rates for relief?—They never really earn a subsistence wage.

2285. And you would say that what are known as the loafing class ("the lapsed masses," as the phrase is) are very largely recruited from, and due to, casual labour?—Very largely, indeed, due to casual labour.

2286. Now, do you think it possible to organise a scheme whereby those casuals could be employed when not required at the docks or elsewhere in providing for their own requirements?—I think it would be very possible and very simple indeed if the docks were all under one management, under the control of some Dock Trust, or the municipality, or the State; but under the present conditions I think it would be extremely difficult, because the shipowners and the Dock Company, I believe, would be at loggerheads between themselves.

2287. Now, in regard to Paris and the experiment which has been referred to, that was confined exclusively to town labour, was it not?—Yes.

2288. You do not propose that workshops shall be opened merely to provide work for those who are out of work, and the produce to be placed upon the market, do you?—Certainly not.

2289. If that were done, would it lead to a repetition of the Paris failure due to overproduction of goods?—It would certainly lead to a reproduction of the Paris failure, and I should consider myself that it would be a most disastrous experiment to make.

2290. What you have suggested, as I gather, is that the State should organise colonies into which persons unable to find employment should be free to enter, there to take part in producing sufficient food, clothing, furniture, and other necessaries of life to supply their own requirements and the requirements of those dependent upon them?—Certainly.

2291. So that it would not be necessary to sell any of the produce of the colony in order to purchase woollen goods, for example?—The produce of

Mr. *Keir-Hardie*—continued.

of the colony should be consumed on the spot by the men themselves.

2292. And I suppose that sheep for the supply of wool could be kept under the colony?—Yes; as well as under the farmer.

2293. And, I presume, that under the colony miners could be employed to supply coal?—Certainly; if there were any coal on the estate.

2294. And that there could be a system of exchange between the coal pits in the coal districts and the food-supplying colonies in the agricultural districts?—Certainly.

2295. That is why you advocate, I presume, that the State should undertake the work, in order that the produce may be systematically distributed?—I consider that unless the State, or some very responsible authority, did it, it would be a failure.

2296. Mr. Hilleary, in giving evidence here, said that he did not know what became of the poor, who applied for relief during the winter months, when the good weather came in—he assumed that they found employment. You have already said that that does not tally with your experience. I want to ask now whether the agencies, which are at work in West Ham for the relief of the respectable poor, are sufficient to meet the distress prevailing?—No, certainly not; not to meet it efficiently.

2297. Would a grant from the State Treasury in any way help you, or would it be desirable? I will put it in this fashion: Would it be desirable that a grant from the State Treasury should be made immediately to tide over the distress now prevailing in West Ham?—I think that a grant from the State would have very great value if the State instructed the local authorities at the same time to put on all the men that could possibly be put on the works that were carried out.

2298. I will put the question then in another fashion, as it is important: Is it, in your opinion, necessary that aid should be given from the State to meet the distress in West Ham at present, this winter?—I consider that West Ham itself is quite unable to cope with the distress which is caused by the want of employment this winter.

2299. And that the very best you have been able to do is in no sense of the word adequate relief for the poor?—It is in no sense adequate; we can just keep the people alive, but that is all.

2300. You have stated a number of proposals which you would like to see adopted: forestry, land reclamation, and so on, to provide work for the unemployed. May I ask you whether you consider that these afford a permanent remedy for the unemployed problem?—I do not consider that they afford a permanent remedy.

2301. Have you any suggestions to make as to what would afford a permanent remedy?—I think they would be in the right direction, because they would be wealth-producing experiments; but I see no final remedy for the unemployed question other than the entire re-organisation of industry upon an ethical instead of a competitive basis; that is my own private opinion.

2302. You mean production for use, and not for profit, do you?—Certainly.

2303. Just one more question I should like to put about afforestment: I happen to live in a

Mr. *Keir-Hardie*—continued.

locality where woods are plentiful, where woods abound, and I find that men are employed all the year round in attending to the young trees, and in cutting down the trees when full grown I presume you would intend that the forest planted by the State should ultimately be used to supply the demand for timber in the country?—Certainly.

2304. And thus relieve us from the necessity of being dependent upon other countries for our supply of timber?—Certainly.

Mr. *Logan.*

2305. I understood you to say that you considered that the State had the responsibility of looking after the unemployed?—I think that the State has a responsibility for the unemployed.

2306. Does not the State already recognise that responsibility through the Poor-law system?—No, I do not think it does; my own opinion is that the Poor-law system was not intended to apply, and does not apply in the present day, to the great mass of the unemployed.

2307. It simply recognises the State's responsibility to keep people alive?—Yes.

2308. And you consider that as the community, as a matter of fact, is compelled to keep people alive, it would be to the interest of the community to keep them in a healthier and better state than they are at the present time?—Certainly.

2309. And that any loss which the State might suffer in carrying out that scheme would be more than counterbalanced by the increased efficiency of the labouring population generally?—That is my opinion.

2310. To say nothing of the saving in the rates?—Yes, certainly.

2311. On the farm colonies, which you propose that the State should start, I think you said you did not propose that wages should be paid?—I do not think it is at all necessary that wages should be paid, in the ordinary sense, at all.

2312. I quite understand, of course, that with unmarried men; you may take unmarried men down, and you need not pay them, but have you considered what you would do with married men with families? Would you shift the families, as well as the men, down to these farm colonies?—I do not think you could say that any farm colony had proved itself to be a success unless you had shown that you could keep, not only the man, but his wife and his family.

2313. Then I understand that you propose that the various farm colonies in the country should exchange what they produce one with another?—Yes, I think one colony in one district might easily be able to exchange its special class of goods with another colony in another district.

2314. I understood you to say that you did not think that stone-breaking yards are the best means of employing the unemployed?—No, I think the stone-yards, so far as I have been able to watch its operation, has a very demoralising and degrading tendency.

2315. Apart from its demoralising effect, is it not a fact that it is an absolute loss to the community?—Certainly.

2316. And that work can be done very much better, and very much cheaper, by machinery, can it not?—Certainly.

Mr. *Logan*—continued.

2317. In Question No. 2007, amongst the reasons you gave for the chronic want of employment in South West Ham, you gave the reason that the Dock Company now employ more permanent men, or rather that their permanent staff is larger?—Yes.

2318. And that fewer casuals are employed?—That is not the reason for the chronic want of employment. I was just comparing the old *régime* with the new *régime*. Under the old *régime* the Dock Company employed a large number of casuals, or if *they* did not employ them the contractors did—they handed over the matter to the contractors; but under the new *régime*, to-day, the Dock Company employ fewer men, and they are nearly all permanent, or preference men, and the casuals are employed by the shipowners, who now do the great proportion of the work.

2319. I think you said that, at the present time, there is something over 6,000 casuals in West Ham?—I should say the number would be in excess of that.

2320. Does not that point to the fact that the men have not yet adapted themselves to the new order of things there, that is to say, they have not yet adapted themselves to the employment of more permanent men and fewer casuals?—It certainly points to the fact that the shipowners have made no very strenuous attempt to organise their labour upon a more permanent basis.

2321. After providing for the wants of a man now, this winter, would it not be a kindness to devise some scheme of preventing the influx of casual labour into West Ham, under the impression that it will be employed at these docks?—If possible, it ought to be prevented, this influx of casual labour.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

2322. Before leaving the docks, perhaps you would answer this question: whether machinery has not been largely introduced, and whether that has not considerably displaced men in the docks?—Machinery has been introduced into the docks of late, and is being still more introduced, and the probability is that if things go on as they are the American methods will be adopted, and that you will have 50 per cent. of your dockers thrown out of employment.

Mr. *Bartley.*

2323. Is it since the strike that it has increased?—The increase of machinery has been going on gradually all through; it is only natural.

Mr. *Logan.*

2324. I think you followed my point, which is this: Men have been in the habit in past years of coming to West Ham because there is a lot of casual employment there?—Yes.

2325. That casual employment now, to a certain extent, to a great extent indeed, has ceased, because the Dock Companies employ permanent men?—There is still a large amount of casual employment, and that is what brings the men up there still; the shipowners and the contractors employ it.

2326. You think some means should be taken to let the men know that there is not as much casual employment there as there used to be—because men will flock to where there is much casual work?—I think some means should be taken to keep men back from coming into the district in the hope of getting work. There is not enough work for half the men in the docks now.

2327. So that there may not be a permanent increase of men who think they will either get work—or be kept there—in West Ham?—Certainly.

2328. On page 135, Question 2077, you make a statement which I must say considerably astonished me. Do you give it as your experience that the weaklings can be made into able-bodied men in such a period as from three to four and a half months?—The statement does look somewhat strong, but by "weaklings" I meant men who are physically weak; I did not mean men who were born weak, so to speak; I meant men who had not had sufficient food for many months; and possibly for years past. They have not been properly fed, and sufficient food and fresh air made a great deal of difference to them.

2329. You mean men who are weak really through want of proper nourishment?—Yes.

2330. Have you any experience as to whether any of the large number of agricultural labourers that flock to West Ham would be anxious to get back again on to the land if they had the opportunity?—My experience is that the best men are very anxious to get back on to the land.

2331. And would, if they saw any hope, go back?—Yes, especially if you could make the life in the country a little brighter and a little less monotonous; and that could easily be done.

2332. You were asked a question as to the amount of work which the planting of trees was likely to give in the years succeeding the planting: have you had any experience of that?—I have had no experience.

2333. Then you would not be surprised to know that for two or three years succeeding the planting of young trees there would be quite as much work, if not more work, in looking after the trees and keeping the ground clean, than in the actual planting of them?—I should have thought so. I was surprised to hear that there was no work required; I certainly thought that work was required.

2334. You do not know that, as a rule, there is a great deal of work after the trees are planted; you do not know it from your own experience?—I do not know that from my own experience.

2335. There is one other question that I should like to ask you as to this: You seem to have given a great deal of thought to this subject. Have you ever considered what means could be found to give employment to men in a winter like the one we have just experienced, men who have been unable to lay by a sufficiency to keep them for the two months they have been idle; have you ever thought of any scheme to meet that case?—I must confess, sir, that I have been unable to devise, in my own mind, or to think out any scheme by which, during an exceptionally hard winter, men could be given work in any very great numbers if their usual work were stopped.

2336. You

Mr. *Logan*—continued.

2336. You can suggest nothing except a greater rate of wages when they are employed, so that they would be able to put by a little more?—I think that that is required certainly.

2337. In reference to the disfranchisement that follows an application for outdoor relief, I understand you to say that you would have that rule suspended for men who had never applied before; but you do not mean to say that, supposing we have a bad winter next winter, you would not suspend the rule in favour of a man who had applied this winter if he had to apply again next winter?—Oh, no. I would suspend it altogether, that is my opinion. I was just throwing out a suggestion which I thought might meet, possibly, with the approval of the Local Government Board.

2338. My last question is this: Considering the difficulties there will be in meeting the distress this winter, seeing the many objections there are to a State loan, and considering what you heard Mr. Hilleary say in reference to their powers of finding money in West Ham, do not you think that, supposing a short Act were passed now suspending that rule which disfranchises a man if he applies for outdoor relief, it would meet the difficulties of the case for this winter to a very considerable extent?—I do not think it would meet the difficulties of the unemployed. It would meet the difficulties of those who have been accustomed to go to the parish or to the stone-yard; that is to say, they would get food, but I do not think it would meet the difficulty of the large number of men unemployed who want work, and who ought to have work, because they are being demoralised by the absence of work.

2339. Quite so: but seeing that you could not improvise all at once a scheme for giving these men work, and considering that the Town Clerk of West Ham says that by the end of the month, which we enter upon to-morrow, most of the men will be at work, do not you think that if this rule were suspended for the rest of this winter many of the men who now want work, and who you tell us are anxious to work, would (if accepting relief did not carry with it disfranchisement) be glad to accept some little relief to tide them over this next month?—I do not think the Town Clerk was right, sir; I do not think the men will be in work.

2340. Supposing he was right, do you think that suspending this rule would help the men very considerably?—It would help considerably.

2341. It would be better than nothing at all?—It would be better than nothing at all, certainly.

Mr. *Bousfield.*

2342. What University is your Settlement in connection with?—Oxford.

2343. Are you an Oxford man?—I am an Oxford man.

2344. I think in your census you put the figure of 10,000 unemployed?—10,000 workers—9,000 men.

2345. The other 1,000 would be women?—Yes.

2346. Then we may say 10,000 workers altogether?—Yes.

Mr. *Bousfield*—continued.

2347. Including among that number some who had applied for Poor-law relief?—Oh! a considerable number.

2348. I mean it is including everybody, independent of whether they applied for relief or not?—Yes.

2349. Skilled workers and unskilled workers?—Yes.

2350. And you were inclined to put the minimum number of unemployed in summer at 5,000, I think?—The minimum in a bad summer.

2351. It might fall below 5,000 sometimes?—It might fall, possibly, below 5,000 in a good summer, when trade was not in a depressed state.

2352. And I think you stated that, as an essential part of any solution of this question, or partial solution of it, it is necessary that we should have a system of registration, by which, from month to month throughout the year, we should know the numbers of unemployed?—That is my opinion.

2353. Now, with regard to these 10,000 unemployed workers. I think you put down about 2,000 as skilled artisans out of work, such as boiler-makers, engineers, sugar makers, sailors, firemen, and so on?—Yes.

2354. That is, 2,000 out of the 10,000?—Yes.

2355. Then there would be the class of labourers out of work—men accustomed to ordinary labour in different trades?—Yes.

2356. What would that run to, do you think, out of the 10,000?—The labourers out of work in the North are about 60 per cent. of the unemployed.

2357. Then that would be more than half?—More than half, yes; labourers including dockers.

2358. How many of those do you suppose would be accustomed to ground work?—I think 30 per cent. of those would be accustomed to have used their hands in that way, with a pick or a shovel, at some time or other.

2359. Then out of the 10,000, 30 per cent. would be skilled artisans, you think, or tradesmen of different trades, skilled workers?—Yes.

2360. Then a third of your 60 per cent., that would make another 20 per cent., would be accustomed to ground work?—Yes.

2361. Then another 40 per cent. would be accustomed to dockers' work, that class of labour?—A very large number, indeed, would be accustomed to dockers' work.

2362. That leaves us 20 per cent. I suppose there is in West Ham, as in other places, a considerable number of loafers, who never will do any more work than they are obliged to?—Yes, Sir; I am sorry to say we are manufacturing them at a great rate everywhere.

2363. And a number of vicious people, who are on the borderland of crime?—Not so large in West Ham as in some other districts of East London.

2364. But, still, there would be some?—There would be some, of course.

2365. I want to know the classes you have to deal with, if you want to get a complete solution of the question?—Yes; but we have this advantage in West Ham, that we do get an influx of honest, steady men who have been accustomed to regular work during the rest of their lives.

Mr. *Bousfield*—continued.

2366. Forgive me, they would be included in the 80 per cent. we have already taken account of?—Yes.

2367. I was trying to classify them?—Yes.

2368. At the bottom end you have this class of loafers and the criminal class, and men, I suppose, who would be incapable, from their habits and training, of doing a week's consecutive work, if they got it?—Yes. I only want to emphasise the fact that there is a smaller percentage of the criminal class in West Ham, that is all.

2369. These different classes shade off into one another, do not they?—Very much, indeed.

2370. As a practical question, when a man comes to you he may belong to one class or another class, or lie between them; you cannot draw a sharp line of demarcation when you see the man, and hear what he has to say, and say: You are good for so and so; you cannot determine his character, can you?—Not in a moment.

2371. And you suggest that you should be able to offer such a man work?—Yes.

2372. Now I ask you, dealing with the class of unemployed as a whole, if you are to deal successfully with it, is it not essential that if you offer work the rate of wages you offer should be considerably less than the normal rate of wages for the time being?—No, sir, I cannot say I do think that.

2373. Have you had any experience of the value of the labour of the unemployed class as a whole?—I have had considerable experience.

2374. Have you ever taken out the cost of any work which has been done by the unemployed, taking them as they come, and putting them at their work; have you reckoned out the cost of any such work, and compared it with what it would have cost if it had been done at the ordinary rate of wages by ordinary labour?—Yes, I am at present employing a considerable number of painters to do some work of mine. They were all unemployed painters, taken as they happened to come.

2375. That is not the case I am putting; I am putting to you the case of some sort of work on which you could put any man, not painter's work, on which you could put a painter, but the same sort of work as that you would propose to offer to that largest class of all whom you could not classify: and to whom you would say: Here is work. I suppose ground work would be the work you would have to offer to the bulk of them, would it not?—Yes.

2376. We will take ground work, then. Have you any experience of the value for that class of work of unemployed labour, taken as a whole?—Yes.

2377. I do not want to go into detail, because one must not make these things too long; but is it not a fact that if you take them all round, taking the men as they come to you, and as you put them on the land to do the work, their work is not worth half what the work of ordinary labourers would be who were in work, and of ordinary industrious habits?—I think possibly, if you took them quite at random, it might not be worth half the ordinary labour.

2378. Then I ask you, if you are to be prepared with work on which you are to put all and sundry who come to you, is it not essential that you should offer them, say, not more than two-thirds the rate of wages prevailing in the locality for that kind of work?—No, I do not think so, sir; I think (as I said before somewhere, in answer to some question,) that you should classify the unemployed.

2379. Now, there are a large number, of course, that you cannot classify, I mean, until you have had experience of them you cannot classify them, can you?—Not until you have had experience of them, no.

2380. And by the time you have had experience of them perhaps the need of classification is gone, and the men gone, too, in many cases?—That is one point I should like to insist upon, that the need will never go while we continue as we do now.

2381. I want to speak of the particular men. Do not you think that the purposes of any scheme should be to deal with the floating population of unemployed, with the object of putting them back into the ordinary industrial ranks as soon as possible?—I think it is impossible to do it; that is my own opinion. I think you are likely to have more unemployed every year than you have now.

2382. Do you contemplate, then, permanent State employment for a large proportion of the population?—I can see no help for it; my firm conviction is that we shall have more unemployed in future years than we have had in the past, with the introduction of fresh machinery. Fresh machinery will be introduced, and we shall get a larger number of unemployed; and I see certainly no hope of getting all the men unemployed at present back into the ordinary industrial channel.

2383. Will you answer my question: Do you contemplate a certain permanent State employment of a large proportion of the population?—Certainly I do.

2384. I put this to you: The moment you have got this permanent State employment they become regularly employed, do not they?—Yes.

2385. Then you are still left with a floating population of unemployed, due to different changes in different industries, one industry going up, and another industry going down, are you not?—Yes.

2386. Is not that rather the question that we are addressing ourselves to here? *You* have in view the reconstitution of society, but *we* are here dealing with the question of the floating population of unemployed whom we hope to tide over a bad time, so that they may go back into the ranks of the employed?—Yes.

2387. You understand that is our object?—Yes.

2388. Leaving the broad general question, which would perhaps take us too far, what I want to put to you is this: That if we are to deal with this floating mass of labour, not to put it permanently to work, but to deal with it temporarily, having regard to the difficulty of classifying it, and to the very large number of classes we should have to make, ought we not to offer a rate of wages for the work not more than, say, two-thirds of the ordinary wages paid for that work?—I know it does seem as though that

Mr. *Bousfield*—continued.

that was a right, a proper, and a just thing upon the surface; but my contention is that, if you look under the surface, it is economically unsound. Of course, I know that it can be said on the opposite side that my argument is economically unsound, that to pay men the trades union rate of wages is unsound altogether; but I believe that in the future we shall discover that to pay a low wage, even to these unemployed men who cannot do work of the market value, is a bad thing.

2389. Would you pay them more than the worth of their work?—Not more than the real value of their work.

2390. I mean the worth of their work if it were done by ordinary skilled labour at ordinary rates?—I feel it is necessary to make a distinction.

2391. Try and follow my question. I put the case, we will say, of a mass of ground work—a certain lot of ground work done by ordinary labour at ordinary rates would cost so much; if you are going to do that by the unemployed, would you pay them more than the value of their work, reckoned by the ordinary standard?—I have already admitted, sir, that it would cost more; so, practically, I say that I would pay more. If I admit that it would cost more to do it, then I admit also that I should be paying more.

Mr. *Logan.*

2392. Because they would starve if they got no more than the value of their work, you mean? Yes.

Mr. *Bousfield.*

2393. I want to ask you what you think the effect would be in West Ham. Take my premises now, please, as to the rate of wages. Supposing that all over the country the guardians of the poor were authorised to offer, in some form or another, work at the rate of wages not exceeding two-thirds of the ordinary rate in the district, what do you think the effect would be in West Ham as regards your unemployed question. I put it that not merely they are to do it in West Ham, but that it is being done in other places, too. Do not you think that that would practically meet the difficulty that you have in West Ham?—I am not quite sure that I fully understand what you mean.

2394. If your guardians, in common with others, were to find such work as that, whether on the land or in other ways, and offered for it two-thirds of the rate of wages obtaining for that kind of work in the ordinary way, do not you think that that should meet the difficulty?—I do not undervalue that at all; but I think it would be better on the whole, taking everything into consideration, to pay the trades union rate.

2395. Never mind the rate. Assume, you know, that it was to be done at the rate I suggest, of two-thirds, I want you to take that from me (I do not want to pursue that further), do not you think that would practically meet the difficulty or cope with the distress. It might not give what you call "a living wage," but would not it, practically, cope with the distress and with the difficulty of those who, for the time being, might be out of work?—I think that it would cope, to a large extent, with the distress, the actual want of food, and the suffering as a result.

Mr. *Bousfield*—continued.

2396. If all guardians were empowered to do it, it would not have the effect of drawing work from one part of the country to another, would it?—No.

2397. If we had them paying two-thirds of the ordinary rate of wages it would not have the effect of drawing people from their ordinary occupation to be employed by the guardians, would it? They would rather get the full wage if they could than two-thirds of the wage from the guardians?—Yes, certainly; except that a great many men are willing to accept a smaller wage for permanent work than a larger for irregular work.

2398. You mean there would be some difficulty still left there; there would be a tendency, you think, to draw labour from the ordinary ranks of labour even if two-thirds were given?—Yes; it is a very strong argument for regular labour as opposed to casual.

2399. Did not the Paris scheme break down greatly because the ordinary rate of wages was given, and men preferred to get that rate under a loose master than under a private master; was not that the real reason why the Paris scheme broke down?—That is one reason.

2400. At all events, that difficulty would be obviated so far. If you only paid two-thirds of the normal rate of wages to that extent it would be obviated?—To that extent it would be.

2401. Now, as regards relief: With regard to the best class of skilled labour, you could not put that upon ground work, for instance, could you?—It would be unwise to do it.

2402. You know, of course, that many trades unions have an unemployed fund to meet that?—Yes.

2403. And I suppose you would admit that a first-class, thrifty workman ought to subscribe, if possible, his 6*d.* a week to his trade union fund?—Yes.

2404. Now, with regard to the less provident class of skilled workmen who do not do that, do not you think that they would be very glad if they could have a loan in the winter from the local authorities, or the guardians, which they could repay when they were in work again, do not you think that would be a great assistance to them?—It would be, quite possibly, a great assistance for any one winter; but it is so inadequate a solution that I do not think I should be prepared to throw my energies into any such scheme.

2405. It is not a "solution," I am not putting it as that, I am only putting it as one part of a very complicated problem: Do not you think a loan would meet the case of many skilled workmen who ordinarily do regular work, and might happen to be thrown out of work, for a time not able to get it, and who might be temporarily in need of help?—For any one winter it would; there are loan societies all over the East-end now in existence.

2406. Do they want security?—The men themselves form their own security.

Mr. *Bousfield*—continued.

2407. In what way is that?—They subscribe so much, and they guarantee one another.

2408. Then, practically, that provides a kind of unemployed fund, does it not?—Yes.

Mr. *Mather.*

2409. A people's bank?—No; there are societies called "loan societies," which the men themselves form, and which they guarantee themselves.

Mr. *Bousfield.*

2410. Now with regard to the question of disfranchisement, you do not suggest, do you, a wholesale relaxation of the rule that a pauper is not entitled to a vote?—Personally, I have a very great objection to disfranchising anybody, unless he is a criminal.

2411. Well, criminal; I was going to put it to you with regard to the classes I have referred to, the idle, the loafing, or the vicious class; do you think they ought to exercise the full rights of citizenship?—I do not think we are likely to make an idle loafer much better by taking away his rights of citizenship.

2412. Do you think the man who has got work three parts of the year, and who spends perhaps a quarter of his wages in the public house, so that he has got nothing to fall back upon in the winter, is the sort of man who is best calculated to help in choosing a right Representative for Parliament?—I do not think it much matters; he does not take any interest in things at all.

(Adjourned for a short time.)

Mr. *Lawrence.*

2413. May I ask you whether you are a professional man, or in business?—I am not in business.

2414. Nor a professional?—I am simply at the head of the University Settlement.

2415. You say you have studied experiments of putting people on the land; I suppose you have studied the Abbey Mills experiment?—Yes.

2416. Are you aware that more than half of those specially selected workers proved unhelpable, even after working there the whole time?—I am aware, sir, that they were *said* to be unhelpable.

2417. You desire to send the physically incompetent to labour farms; that is the case, is it not?—Yes.

2418. What warrants you in thinking that such people can be made self-supporting on such lands, which have been thrown up by farmers and labourers, of whom no incompetence, mental or physical, can be alleged?—Two things warrant me in thinking that. One is, that those men who are physically incompetent in the towns often become physically competent if they only have proper food and fresh air; and the other reason is that the farm colony would be on an entirely different footing to the farms that are at present conducted by private owners.

2419. Are you aware that labour on land in the country now only finds work for artisans to the extent of something like one-tenth of all the labour?—Yes, I am aware of that.

Mr. *Lawrence*—continued.

2420. Therefore, for all purposes, artisan labour on the land would not meet the case of the unemployed?—In the farm colonies it would be much more likely to meet it than it does at present, because more artisans would be employed on the farm colonies.

2421. How do you make that out?—Because my own opinion is that other trades and other industries should be worked in connection with the ordinary agricultural work of the farm colony.

2422. Will you define "exceptional distress." Does a week's frost constitute it, or how many weeks?—Exceptional distress, I should say, is dependent not upon one week's frost or several weeks' frost, but the amount of labour that has been done previous to the time of the frost setting in.

2423. So that if a big job comes to an end the distress is exceptional when it ceases?—If a big job comes to an end, and a man does not get another big job for 8, 10, 12, or 14 weeks, the probability is that he will be in distress at the end of that period.

2424. If some fund external to a man's own resources meets emergencies which are the annual experience of English life, why should a labourer ask for wages to provide against such emergencies, or why, if he gets such wages, should he husband them against those contingencies?—May I ask you, sir, to repeat the question?

2425. If some fund external to a man's own resources helps him against emergencies (which we all, living in England, must look forward to), why should he demand wages to enable him to provide against contingencies such as are annually inevitable?—I must confess that even now I cannot quite see the whole point of the question.

2426. If a man is thrown out of work owing to a circumstance which is (so called) exceptional, but which is practically inevitable in English life, and some fund, from any quarter, helps him to meet that emergency, why should he demand wages which will enable him to meet those emergencies? Will it not encourage improvidence, and encourage a low rate of wages, if a man, when he is in one of those emergencies, is provided for by funds external to his own pocket?—Yes; I should be prepared to admit that a man would not be justified in asking money to meet these special emergencies if you gave him regular work all the rest of the year, except when these special exceptional winters occur. If you gave him work all the rest of the time, and paid him a large wage for doing that work, he would then be in a position to keep himself during the exceptional seasons.

2427. So that, practically, the provision of a special fund enables him to provide for himself, and keep at work at less wages in consequence?—I do not admit that.

2428. If a provident man abstains from coming on this local relief, is he not unfairly treated, when compared with the improvident man who has received the same wages and run through them?—If two men have started with equal opportunities and have received equal wages, and have been employed exactly the same length of time, then I should say certainly that the improvident

Mr. *Lawrence*—continued.

provident man is, to that extent, being treated too well.

2429. You say that by only giving a few days relief work a week you administer a check to undue demands; how do you know that such a man is not working elsewhere on the other days?—The only thing to do is to safeguard it as far as you possibly can.

2430. How would you do it?—I should safeguard it by making an examination into each individual case.

2431. Was that done in the cases which came under your personal notice?—No; simply because it has not been attempted.

2432. Then you are now relieving people who may be getting work elsewhere on other days?—We are not giving relief work just now; at least, I am not.

2433. I thought you were employing people; you said you were employing painters?—Yes, I am employing a few painters.

Chairman.

2434. That is a private matter, is it not?—That is a private matter; I do make an examination into those cases.

Mr. *Lawrence.*

2435. But, still, I understand that you do advocate relief works, that you have employed people on relief works, and yet there is no absolute means of checking whether the men you employ on a certain day are not working elsewhere on other days?—I think there are means of checking, but I do not think they have been resorted to.

2436. May it not easily happen that men may get this work, and then go and compete in the labour market with other more self-respecting men, and in consequence of this relief be able to take less wages than a man who has not applied to the local authority?—I do not think that is at all probable.

2437. But it may happen, may it not. If a man is getting six days' work a week, three at the labour yard, and three in some unknown quarter, if he competes with a man who does not come to the labour yard, he can naturally get more food and more money?—It will be a severe reflection on employers, sir, if that is so.

2438. The employer cannot know?—If an employer paid such a low rate of wage as to make that possible it would be a reflection on him.

2439. I do not think the question of the employer is in any sense called in. A man who has only work three days a week, and has so much self-respect that he will not go to the labour-yard, or seek local relief, must take what he can get; therefore, he may take anything; but a man who has got three days' work through local relief and three days from an employer will naturally demand less money from the local employer than the man who has only the three days work from the employer and none from the local relief?—Do not you think, sir, the argument cuts both ways. If the man has not done any work at all he is more likely to take a low wage than the man who has done three days' stone-yard work, and does not so much need it; the man who has done three days in the stone-yard is more likely to hold out for the higher rate of wage, because he is not starving.

Mr. *Lawrence*—continued.

2440. Practically, he competes with the man who does not work in the stone-yard; and the man who does not work in the stone-yard, being so much more near to starving, must take the lower rate of wage, and so his wage is kept down by the stone-yard man?—I understood you to say that the man who worked in the stone-yard would take a lower rate of wage than the other would.

2441. No doubt he would; he would keep down the rate of wages?—I do not think so; I think he would want a higher rate than the other. The man who has worked in the stone-yard has got some food; the other has not.

2442. If one district were to administer relief freely and others not, would it not tend to invite certain classes to frequent the liberal district and avoid the other?—I think that is very possible.

2443. So that you would not only require an Imperial fund, but Imperial compulsion to set it going all over the country?—I think it will come into operation naturally if you provide the Imperial fund to assist the local authorities.

2444. Surely, if you get the Imperial fund the local authority must increase its taxation. The chances are that the local authority, even with the Imperial fund, would not do anything to increase its taxation that it could help?—I can only judge, sir, from our own district. I do not know what provincial towns, and so on, would do, but we should, I feel quite sure, be prepared to contribute our share and to make some considerable sacrifice to absorb the unemployed.

2445. But if your system is an expensive one, and another system is not so expensive, is it not likely that they will not adopt your system, but that they will adopt the other?—That is possible, of course. If you can offer two systems—one less expensive than the other—the probability is that the less expensive one will be adopted.

2446. Have you heard Mr. Keir-Hardie's statement that, if no relief fund is voted by Parliament, efforts should be made on the part of the unemployed to break down the practice of the Poor-law; and do you approve of that?—I was not present when he made that statement.

2447. Would you at all endorse that sentiment?—I do not quite see the point of the question: Do I wish to break down the Poor-law? Is that it?

2448. Yes.—I do not wish to break down the Poor-law; I want to make it more useful.

2449. You contend that a man has a right to have work found for him. Am I correct in saying that?—I have contended that the State is responsible in large measure for the want of employment (the community is), and therefore the State should do something to provide work for him.

2450. Are there not many districts where there is no more work fit for relief works, and if so, what then is to be done?—That is just the case where the State could step in effectively and take these men from a district. If there is absolutely no work for these men in any one district, then it seems to me essential that the State should take them out of the district and

Mr. *Lawrence*—continued.

put them in a district where there is work, where there is a possibility of earning a livelihood.

2451. If an industry is decaying from natural causes will not this "finding work" principle merely prolong the suffering caused by the inevitable shifting of labour to other work centres?—I think if an industry has decayed from natural causes, or what are called natural causes under the present system, it would be the duty of the State, or of the local authorities, to see to it that some other form of industry was found which was more productive. I consider that putting men upon the land, as I have contended already, —is just one of those ways or methods which might be employed.

2452. When you have got the optical evidence of the failure of cultivating land, how can you say that there is still money to be made out of land?—I do not believe, sir, in making money out of land in the sense in which you are now referring to it. I somewhere say that I should not put these men back on to the land in order to make money out of it, but to keep themselves out of it. If they could make enough out of the land to keep themselves, that would be a good deal gained; they are starving now.

2453. Would you view these land colonies as out-relief?—I should not treat them as the Poor-law would treat them under present circumstances; I mean to say, I should not disfranchise a man because he went on to a farm colony.

Mr. *Billson.*

2454. In regard to the immediate necessities of the people, I should like to ask you whether you would make a distinction between those who would ultimately have to go to the land and those who might after a time be left?—Yes.

2455. That is to say, you would not at once draft off an unemployed man out to your farm colony?—You mean, if we had one in existence. No; I certainly should attempt to classify them first.

2456. And you would bear with him for a month or so to see whether you could find work for him?—Yes.

2457. In regard to that, you spoke of a grant, of an Imperial subsidy, for the purpose of maintaining the poor?—Yes.

2458. Would you have that go into the general poor fund of West Ham, or would you have it separately administered?—I should prefer that it was administered by the local authority, and, preferably, the municipal authority.

2459. On a different basis from the ordinary poor fund?—On a different basis to the ordinary poor fund.

2460. And would you propose that that sum granted out of the Imperial resources should be met by an equal sum raised on the spot?—I should think that would be a fair thing.

2461. By the guardians, or from private charity?—By the municipal authority.

2462. By means of a rate?—Yes; if the offer is made to the guardians, by the Poor-law rate; if the offer is made to the municipal authority, by the general district rate.

2463. Do you think that a special relief fund of that nature could be administered apart from the ordinary poor relief of the district?—I think it could.

Mr. *Billson*—continued.

2464. And you would apply it, I suppose, to what you call the deserving poor; that is, those out of work from causes over which they had no control?—Yes.

2465. And would you be disposed to limit to that class freedom from disqualification for the purpose of relief?—I should not disqualify.

2466. I know that your own view is that no one should be disqualified; but do you think that, in the present state of opinion, we might make that distinction, to relieve from disqualification those who are relieved by this special fund, and not to relieve those who are on the ordinary normal pauper poor fund?—I think it would be a very wise action on the part of the Local Government Board to make a distinction between the honest deserving man and the man who is a loafer.

2467. There has been a suggestion made before the House that a district should be declared to be a distressed district by the guardians, and that in that district disqualification should not prevail. Would that, do you think, be satisfactory?—I think there would be very many difficulties connected with such a distinction. It would be much better to make it uniform throughout the country, to have a clause which might apply to the whole country.

2468. Now about that special relief fund for the unemployed, do you think there would come to be a feeling that that might be resorted to without demoralisation by the deserving unemployed?—I think if it were understood generally by the workmen who want employment at present that the State was giving them (or the State and the Municipality together were giving them) this employment because they considered it to be their duty to give them this employment, the probability is that it would have no demoralising tendency whatever.

2469. But just now I am not dealing with the giving of them employment. I am supposing that there is hard, frosty weather and that there can be practically no employment, and that the only way in which they can be relieved is by a judicious extension of outdoor relief. Now, I want to know whether you think that the deserving unemployed would apply to a relief fund of that kind more freely than they do to the present normal relief fund?—Yes, I think they would apply more freely, and that it would do less harm.

2470. Now, there is only one other point. I began by saying that this was to come from Imperial resources; but is there any reason why guardians should not raise it locally as against a subscription by local charitable persons—half from the guardians as against half raised by ordinary charitable funds for this special purpose?—I think, sir, the whole point is that we want (at least, I want) the State to recognise its share of the responsibility.

2471. But the guardians are the State for that purpose?—No, sir.

2472. Surely they are a portion of the State?—The guardians are a portion of the State; but their work is of a special nature, and of a special character;

Mr. *Billson*—continued.

character; it would have to be reorganised entirely if it is to deal with the whole of the unemployed question. I should say that the Poor-law would have to be not only modified but reshaped.

2473. I follow you, so far as the general subject is concerned, on the ground of works for the unemployed; but I am speaking now of such a period as we have just passed through—a special distress, that no amount of employment provided would meet. You must have, must not you, an extension of the outdoor relief system to meet a case of that kind?—You must relieve, certainly, as things are at present.

2474. Yes; but you have told us that the deserving unemployed will not apply for relief?—They do not wish to apply to the parish for relief at present.

2475. Therefore, I am suggesting the creation of a special fund to furnish relief in a special way for a certain time?—Yes.

2476. I say, need that fund be Imperial; might not half be contributed by the guardians and half by the private charities of the place?—I should much prefer that the one-half was contributed by the State, and the other half by the Poor-law authority. There are plenty of channels for private and voluntary charity still left then.

Chairman.

2477. With regard to the causes of non-employment in West Ham, I understand you to have said that, as far as shipbuilding is concerned, there is no great lack of work now?—I think that the number of those employed in the shipbuilding yard has increased—in fact, I know it has increased—of late, but still, it is not up to its maximum, by any means.

2478. But it is better than it was?—It is better than it was.

2479. As to the sugar factories—you mentioned one which had stopped, but are the others in a depressed state?—The others are not exactly in a depressed state, but the introduction of machinery at one sugar factory has certainly put some men out of employment.

2480. But, on the whole, for skilled men there is not any great want of employment, is there?—The distress is not so great amongst skilled men.

2481. It is chiefly among the labouring class?—Chiefly amongst the general labouring class.

2482. Are they members of a trades union, as a rule?—As a rule, I think, Sir; of course, there are large numbers of casuals who are not.

2483. What union do they belong to mostly?—They belong to the Gasworkers, the General Labourers, the Navvies, and the Dockers unions.

2484. And do they receive any extra assistance in times of need, like the present, from the union?—None whatever.

2485. Could you state any particular reason (or have you stated, if I am asking you to repeat, any particular reason) for the presence of so many unskilled labourers in West Ham?—I think that the docks and the factories are largely answerable for that.

2486. And you stand, to some extent, between the country and the city, do not you, so that the drift either way leaves a residuum with you?—Yes, we get the ebbing tide from the overcrowded districts of East London, and the flowing tide from the agricultural districts.

Chairman—continued.

2487. And possibly the more able-bodied who come in from the agricultural districts go on into the heart of the Metropolis, and the less able stay with you?—It is very possible.

2488. At all events you think the case of West Ham is exceptional?—I am not a judge on the subject, Sir. I really have not the facts at my disposal to enable me to say that. I should say that there are other districts that stand in almost as much need—if not absolutely as much need—as West Ham.

2489. Then you said you thought that the guardians ought to be authorised to acquire land for the purpose of giving employment?—Yes.

2490. Is that for the purpose of cultivating the land as a farm?—I should like, Sir, to see the guardians with power to buy land, and to use it as a test, in order that they might give work on the land instead of the stone-breaking, and that they might grow their own vegetables for their workhouses.

2491. Still as a test; but the time when the test is required is the very time when a farm cannot be used for that purpose, is it not the time of year?—It could not be used, of course, just now, owing to exceptional frosts; but all the rest of the year it could be used; and I am afraid the test will be required for a large number of men for many years to come.

2492. Ordinarily speaking, a farm requires a certain number of men all the year round, does it not?—Yes.

2493. And it is difficult, except for some fantastic purposes, to employ more men on it?—What I mean is, that a farmer who has plenty of money may, out of the opportunities that his land gives him, employ men in beautifying, in altering, or in improving the landed property in some way or other; but that would not be a mercantile purpose; it would not be sort of purpose for which the guardians would use the land?—No.

2494. In the winter, does it appear to you that there would be much means of using land of that sort for this purpose?—I do not know that in a time of frost you could use many men on the land proper in digging or cultivating it, but I am hoping that they would find other means in connection with their settlement, or their colony, which would be useful?

2495. At all events, it would be advantageous, in your opinion, for them to have the power if they chose to exercise it, by way of experiment, of acquiring land, and seeing whether the power of putting men on the land would be an advantage to the district?—Yes, that is my opinion, Sir.

2496. When you state your general theory—that it is the duty or the proper function of the State to see that no one is, from no fault of his own, to any large extent out of employment, in other words that the State should find work for people who are willing to work—how would you get over the difficulty as to locality?—I should get over it by using all the organizations that are at present in existence. The State should *initiate*, the local authority should *carry out*, and all

Chairman—continued.

all the organizations that are available should be placed at the disposal of the local authority.

2497. What I was pointing to was rather this: Supposing I was living in West Ham, and was thrown out of employment, and I said that the State ought to employ me, I might find many places in England much pleasanter to live in than West Ham; why should not I go there, and then say that the State must employ me there?—Well, Sir, I should hold you responsible for having first come to this locality.

2498. You would keep a man to the locality where he went out of work?—He would be, in the first place, primarily responsible for having been found there. If it were a good thing for him to go elsewhere, I should transport him elsewhere.

2499. I put those questions, because it seemed to me that if this theory were adopted everybody would go to the pleasantest parts, and settle there, and claim to be employed there?—If a man came to me and asked for employment, and I was willing to give it, he would have to submit himself in some degree to me; and I presume that if unemployed men were given work by the State they would have to submit themselves largely to the control of the State.

2500. You mean they would have to accept the conditions imposed by the State?—Yes.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

2501. Have you analysed the condition of the 10,000 men who are out of employment in West Ham?—To a certain extent, so far as I could under the circumstances.

2502. Can you tell the Committee whether any of these men were in receipt of pay from any source whatever?—At the time?

2503. At the time they applied for employment?—So far as I know, none of them—none out of the 10,000.

2504. Have you read Mr. Keir Hardie's evidence on that point?—I have read what was given in the papers, which was not, of course, in full.

2504A. Are you aware that a great many of these men belong to the trades union, and are receiving an allowance from the trades union?—I am not aware of that, Sir.

2505. And it is your impression that the 10,000 men who are out of employ at the East End of London do not belong to a trades union?—That is not my impression. My impression is that they do belong to trades unions; but the majority of those who belong to trades unions who pay out-of-work wages are not amongst those men. There are certain trades unions that pay out-of-work money, and those men are not these men; the men who are receiving out-of-work money have made no application for relief.

2506. What trade would those men belong to who would receive out-of-work money?—Engineers and moulders are two examples.

2507. You gave us, yesterday, the opinion that the men who were suffering from want of work were lightermen, watermen, boiler-makers, stevedores, firemen, and men of other trades in which there are trades unions who pay their members a rate when out of work—an unemployed rate?—The only trades unions that pay out-of-work money, of those I mentioned, were the engineers, and (I believe) the boiler-makers.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

2508. Not the stevedores?—No.

2509. Boiler-makers?—The engineers and boiler-makers.

2510. What kind of work do the women follow in West Ham?—They are employed in the jam works and jute works in the immediate locality (not exactly in West Ham), and they do a lot of machinists' work.

2511. The jam trade has been a very thriving trade in West Ham, has it not, lately?—I have no knowledge of that—I think it is fairly flourishing.

2512. What I mean by that is this—there is no instance of any jam factory in West Ham having discharged any of their hands?—No, I think not. There are other works—indiarubber works—in which women are employed.

2513. I know all the trades down there; I have been in that neighbourhood 10 years, and I know something about it myself. Yesterday you mentioned that there are only 1,600 men now employed in the shipbuilding trade out of 4,000?—No; what I said was that I believed the number was about 1,600 employed at present, but that I remembered the time when there were 4,000 nearly.

2514. Do you know the cause of that diminution?—Simply because there have been no ships to build.

2515. Do you know the reason why there have been no ships to build?—My own opinion is that it is because ships cannot be produced as cheaply on the Thames as elsewhere.

2516. Do you know the reason why ships cannot be produced as cheaply on the Thames as elsewhere?—Yes.

2517. Will you kindly tell the Committee?—For two reasons; first, that the general rate of wages is, as a rule, higher in London.

2518. West Ham, we are speaking of?—West Ham is in London for all practical purposes, so far as the rate of wages is concerned; and the other reason is that you have not got your raw material on the spot, and it has to be brought.

2519. But you admit that the cost of living in West Ham is as cheap as anywhere else?—I do not admit that it is as cheap in London or West Ham as in the North of England.

2520. You do not?—No, nor in Scotland.

2521. You do not admit that the cost of living in London is as cheap as it is on the Clyde?—No; rents are higher.

2522. Rents are higher where?—Rents are higher in London than on the Clyde.

2523. In West Ham?—In London and in West Ham.

2524. Then do you think it is owing to the high rate of wage which is paid in West Ham that so many flock there for employment?—No, I do not think so.

2525. But you admit that it is a high rate of wage?—I think that the rates of wages in London have some effect upon bringing men to London, certainly.

2526. Do you know that the honourable Member, Mr. Logan, stated to the Committee that in Leicester they were only paid 5*d.* a day, with

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

with the addition of a loaf, whereas in West Ham they are paid 6*d.* an hour?—Not by the parish.

2527. What are they paid by the parish?—They are paid from 8*d.* upwards and loaves, according to the number of the family.

2528. Per day?—Yes.

2529. Did the Dock Companies change their mode of giving employment to the dockers on account of the strikes?—Partly on account of the strike, but very largely on account of the pressure which was brought to bear, by public opinion, with regard to casual labour.

2530. And not solely and wholly by reason of the strike?—Not solely and wholly by reason of the strike.

Mr. A. F. HILLS, M.A., called in, and Examined.

Chairman.

2531. YOU are chairman of the Shipbuilding Company within this district of West Ham?—I am, Sir.

2532. And you have taken a prominent part in the relief funds that have been established for the purpose of relieving the distress in West Ham?—Yes, I have.

2533. Will you be good enough to state what your experience has been in that matter?—I asked specially to be allowed to speak to the Committee this evening, as I understood they were going to break up, and there might be some difficulty in receiving my evidence, because I represent a committee which has been working for the relief of the poor in West Ham, to which the last witness and his friends have taken very active opposition, and I thought that it would be only fair, as you had had the advantage of hearing his views, and their views, that you should have the views of the other side. The position of West Ham is this: Two years ago a Joint Relief Committee was established, consisting partly of the Council, and partly of the subscribers to a public charitable fund. About 1,000*l.* was raised by the public, and the Corporation of West Ham agreed to find another 1,000*l.* We instituted works down on the Wanstead Flats on a piece of ground of about 180 acres just upon the borders of the borough of West Ham, and we employed men there to do the work, employing them for four days a week only, at six hours a day, and paying them 4d. an hour.

2534. That was last year?—That was last year. At the same time, the Lord Mayor of London was good enough, at my instance, to call together a Mansion House Committee on the distress in London, and the question was very thoroughly threshed out for about three months. The committee at that time—on which was very strongly represented the Charity Organization Society—practically was captured by the Charity Organization Society, and the result was that a negative report was issued, generally recommending nothing and taking up the position that nothing could be done. In order to prove to that committee that something could be done, this experiment was started by West Ham and Poplar. Those two districts are contiguous to each other, and represent very much the same population and the same sort of distress. The same offer was made to the local Board of Works in Poplar as was made to the Council of West Ham. They also adopted it, and the works were carried on in Poplar as

Chairman—continued.

well as in West Ham. The result of four months' experience of those two sets of operations proved to me conclusively that unless some very strong line was taken, so as to separate relief, or assisted labour, from the labour in the ordinary industrial channels, not only was there great danger to the industry of the district, but that there would be very great cost in the works carried out. In West Ham the work carried out last year cost about 50 per cent. more than it would have cost if it had been done under the ordinary conditions. In Poplar it cost about 100 per cent. more; so, during the summer, reasoning over these things, I came to the conclusion that the only remedy was to *piece* the work—to fix a standard of wages as a minimum, and then, having fixed *piece* prices for the work, to give each man the opportunity of earning more if he was willing to work. We made an offer to the Council on very much the same lines as to wages and conditions in the early part of November. There was a great deal of opposition to it—mainly created by the trades unions of the district—because they said it was an attempt to lower the industrial wages of the district; and the whole thing was referred from the relief committee to the Council. The Council took it into consideration; I went down myself and explained the principles on which we were willing to proceed with the work.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

2535. What do you mean by the "Council"?—The Town Council of West Ham. They accepted the offer that was then made to them, and passed a vote of thanks by 25 to 3. A fortnight afterwards, a certain Mr. Will Thorne, who is secretary of one of the trades unions of the district, brought up a contingent of his friends with bands (they brought a red flag into the Council Chamber), and a large crowd came down, consisting of about 500 men, who stood outside, and, practically, brought a good deal of terrorism to play upon the Town Council, and they rescinded that resolution by exactly the same majority as that by which they had accepted the offer a fortnight before.

Chairman.

2536. May I ask, did the individual members change their side?—Precisely. The result was that the West Ham Relief Committee, which was constituted of gentlemen outside, though partly consisting of members of the Town Council, had to consider their position;

Chairman—continued.

and we determined that we would go on with the works just as if the resolution of the Council had nothing to do with it. So we established these works; but that put us in a considerable difficulty, I ought to explain to you, because all the plant of the previous year's experiment (shovels, picks, and a variety of tools, barrows and planks) was the property of the Corporation; these had all to be purchased at a moment's notice by the Relief Committee; they had to be on the works at the moment. We had given notice that we would put the men to work on a certain day. The rescission of the Town Council's resolution came something like a bolt out of the blue, and we had to organise the thing almost at a moment's notice; but we got through those difficulties, and ever since then we have been employing on an average about 120 to 180 men. I should like to hand in to the Committee a paper which I have had prepared for them, as to the West Ham Employment Relief Works, giving the particulars of work done and wages paid, and I think that will be very instructive. [*Copies of the document were handed in.*] If you turn, Sir, to the first page you will see the account of the first week. Those men were taken on as they applied to our registrars, we giving a preference only to the married men; but, practically, you may say they were taken on as they came. There were about 70 men employed the first week, and you will see what they dug and levelled, because I must explain to the Committee that this work on the Wanstead Flats is levelling ground, to prepare it for the purposes of cricket-grounds and football-grounds. The ground has a sort of tussicy grass on the top; it is somewhat uneven; it is full of holes, and the work these men had to do first of all was to cut off the turf, to take off the top spit—which was the better earth—then to level the ground, then to bring back the top spit and to level it again, so as to prepare it for such uses in the spring. There were several operations. Amongst others, the Committee had to settle what was to be paid for the work, and they settled it at 2*s.* per square rod.

Mr. *Logan.*

2537. Square rods of what. You told us the top turf had to be taken off, and, I think, you said a foot of soil; but you spoke so rapidly that I really could not follow you?—No, I did not say a foot of soil. The top turf had to be taken off, and then the top spit—I suppose about nine inches. Then it had to be levelled. I suppose there was a variation of perhaps nine inches in various parts; it is fairly level, and we are getting it absolutely level.

Chairman.

2538. Then the turf had to be put on again?—Then the top spit had to be put back again, and then prepared for sowing. We fixed a "piece" price, and we fixed it at 2*s.* per square rod.

Mr. *Logan.*

2539. What is a "square rod"?—30¼ square yards.

Mr. *Jackson.*

2540. Can you tell us how that compares with what would be ordinarily paid for such work?—It is rather more liberal than the ordinary district rates, but not much more. It was intentionally made slightly more liberal than the district rates. You will see that the 70 men earned 21*l.* 10*s.* the first week. These men were all working together in one group. The rate paid was 4*d.* an hour, which came to 29*l.* 14*s.*; so that there was an absolute loss upon that week's work of 8*l.* 4*s.* at the 4*d.* an hour. Then if you turn over to the second week, you will see that we had by that time got a little more organized; we had broken up into three groups. The first group is the larger group, and that consisted of the more inferior men. We made the groups so as to get the better men together, leaving the worst men in the large sort of tail group doing the inferior quality of work. The big group made a loss, as you will see, of 3*l.* 14*s.* 10*d.* The other two groups made a profit, one of 2*l.* 2*s.*, the other of 1*l.* 2*s.* 8*d.*

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

2541. Would you mind explaining why these groups I. and II. are charged at 7*d.* per rod, and No. III. at 2*s.*?—Yes, that I can very easily explain. In the case where it is charged at 7*d.*, it is where the ground only had to be dug through; the previous work had already been done. The removing of the turf, the removing of the top spit, probably, had been done in the work of the week before. It had to be dug through in order to get the ground into condition before the top spit was put back again.

Mr. *Jackson.*

2542. The prices are the same for the same work in the case of each gang, are not they?—Yes, the prices are the same invariably.

Mr. *Logan.*

2543. Who valued this work; did you ever get tenders for it? Who put the 7*d.* per rod and the 2*s.* per square rod upon it?—That question is very easily answered. You see the names of the committee upon your other Papers—some 15 or 16 gentlemen—there were several contractors amongst them; local contractors and local builders; people who were accustomed to earth works; and the prices were fixed by the committee in consultation. They also took expert advice outside, I may say, as to the rates of the district. These "piece" prices we are quite ready to let anyone investigate. We are satisfied that they are sound "piece" prices; slightly more liberal than the district rates. You will notice that the second group and the third group in that week made a profit respectively of 2*l.* 2*s.* and 1*l.* 2*s.* 8*d.* That practically means that they got 5*d.* an hour instead of 4*d.*, and that money was paid to them as a bonus, or profit, at the end of the week. Then if you turn on to the next week—and I think this next week is the most instructive of all—you will see that there was a loss on the first two groups—in the one case of 4*l.* 10*s.* 6*d.* (again it is the worst group working there). In the next group there was a loss of 1*l.* 15*s.* 11*d.* In the third group there

Mr. *Logan*—continued.

there was a profit of 3*l.* 12*s.* 1*d.* In that group those men earned slightly more than 5*d.* an hour. Groups IV., V., and VI. represent another class of work altogether. These men were digging potatoes—or digging, rather, land for potatoes—about (I suppose) 300 yards away from where the other groups were levelling. It is on the Wanstead Flats. There are some young plantations of trees there which separate the one side from the other. The result was that the men digging the ground for the potatoes were practically out of view of those who were supervising the work until they went across the road to see what they were doing. These men made a loss of 5*l.* 7*s.* 10*d.* out of a total of 12*l.* paid to them. (That is Group IV.) Group V. made a loss of 5*l.* 9*s.* 10*d.* out of a total of 8*l.* 8*s.* Again, in Group VI., out of a total of 6*l.* 12*s.* paid to them they made a loss of 5*l.* 9*s.* 10*d.* That very clearly indicated that these men were not working properly; they were not earning their 4*d.* an hour, nor even 1*d.* per hour. The result was that we enquired very carefully into the matter, and we found that there was an organised opposition among those men; they wanted to break down the whole scheme of relief. That is the reason why those men were not working—not because they could not, but because they would not. The result was that we had to discharge them. If you turn over to the last week you will see the results arrived at there. Though I can give you some particulars orally of what has taken place since, the figures there are still more instructive. The first group working at the levelling made a profit of 1*l.* 2*s.* 1*d.*; the next group made a profit of 11*s.* 10*d.*; the third group made a profit of 1*l.* 18*s.* That brought them up very nearly to the 5*d.* limit per hour, but Groups IV. and V., who were again working at a potato patch, made a loss of 32*l.* 4*s.* 5*d.* out of a total sum of money paid to them of 39*l.* 5*s.* That was, I must remind the Committee, at the 4*d.* rate per hour. Now I think if you look at these first three groups and the last three groups you will realise the injury that can be done by any scheme of administrative relief which has not a limit of price and of "piece" at the back of it. Here were these men, who determined that they would not work, making a loss on the 4*d.* rate of 32*l.* out of 39*l.* in the course of a week. If they had been paid the 6*d.* rate the loss would have been proportionately greater.

Chairman.

2544. May I ask, why should Groups IV. and V. have come to that determination when Groups I., II., and III. did not?—You may very well ask that question, Sir. The reason was that they were separately put on at a separate place. The foreman who was in charge of the levelling (the levelling being very much more accurate and delicate work) was spending a great deal of his time supervising that, to see that the men there were making their levels and attending to their pegs. On the other side they were very much left to themselves, and though it seems curious, as I say it to you, the committee, only meeting once a fortnight, did not realise until a week was over what these men were up to. We got the measurement taken once a week, and it was not

Chairman—continued.

until the end of the week that we realised that this enormous loss was being made; we did not see the state of the case until the loss was substantially made. The loss represents what was going on before we realised the state af affairs.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

2545. May I ask you whether this was not in the nature of a strike, and whether, if the men had been paid 6*d.* an hour instead of 4*d.*, they would not have done full work then?—No, I do not think so. There was no open opposition, it was simply the men quietly sitting down and making up their minds that they would not do the work given to them.

2546. No matter what the price was, these men would not have done the work, you think?—I cannot answer that; I only speak of the facts.

2547. I want to get at the facts, therefore I ask you the question.—You must go and ask them; I do not know.

Mr. *John Wilson* (Durham).

2548. They received the money, did they?—Certainly.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

2549. You said there was an organised attack, or organised opposition; is that so?—There was.

2550. I want to know the ground for that statement?—I make it from what I heard from the foreman and from the men. I cannot give any direct evidence to the effect that it was organised, but I believe it was organised obstruction to the whole scheme.

Mr. *Logan.*

2551. Did Groups IV. and V. work after that week?—No, they did not; they were discharged.

2552. You did not try what you could get out of them by setting a foreman over them?—Yes, we did. When they had a special foreman looking after them they did no better, or very little.

2553. He wanted "sacking," did not he?—It does not speak well for him, but it is very difficult to make men work when they say they will not work under such conditions.

Chairman.

2554. Why do you think they did not want to work?—You know there has been a great deal of ferment going on in West Ham as to this question of 4*d.* an hour. The trade union men want to be paid 6*d.* an hour, and the position of the committee is this: that when you are to give relief in any form by way of employment, you must give a less rate of wages and a less time of employment, so as to draw a line of demarcation between those who are employed for relief and those who are employed in the ordinary channels of industry; and the trades unions have taken exception to that. They say every man must be paid 6*d.* an hour, whether he earns it or whether he does not. That has been the whole contest which has been going on between the committee and the trades unions.

2555. Was there any difference in the quality of the men, between Groups I., II., and III. and Groups IV. and V.?—Not that I know of.

2556. Were the men in Groups IV. and V. less able-bodied, less muscular, less fit for the

Chairman—continued.

work?—There was no separation intentionally made. I cannot speak individually for each man, but I should say that on the whole they were average men.

2557. Having been unemployed (this has been pointed out to us) they were probably underfed, or had been for some time?—That would equally apply to them all. There is no doubt that many of the men did come on only partly fed, but the arrangement we have adopted has been this: We have our shelter and our kitchen, and they go there for food before they begin. They also feed in the middle of the day every day they are working; and there has been a very remarkable difference in the men who have been working the week through on the Flats. At the end of the week they are decidedly very much superior to what they were when they came there in very many instances.

Mr. *Lawrence.*

2558. May I ask were they generally the ordinary "out of work," or were they the respectable class who fall out owing to the severity of the weather?—Some of them were very respectable; some of them were quite the reverse.

Mr. *Mather.*

2559. There was no pauper test about these men?—None whatever.

2560. They did not lose their vote, or anything of that sort?—No.

2561. They were simply employed through the kindness of their neighbours?—Precisely.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

2562. Did not the foreman report every day what was done?—No; he reported once a week. The work was measured up once a week.

Mr. *Lawrence.*

2563. Did you classify these men. Have you gone into their cases, in order to know accurately to which class they belong?—We know what trades they belong to; about 5 per cent. belong to skilled trades, and the total number that have applied is about 1,200 men.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

2564. Was there a ringleader of these men?—That I cannot answer; I do not know.

Mr. *Mather.*

2565. Did you find the skilled men more amenable to your rules than the unskilled?—We found them very amenable as a rule, all the men.

2566. Did you notice any difference between the two classes?—Yes, the better the men the more amenable they were to discipline as a whole. After all, I have only given you a statement of what we have done. My commission to-day from my committee was to place before this Committee a scheme which they consider would be applicable to the whole country. (Unfortunately, I had very short notice that I was expected here to-day.) The particulars of that scheme are contained in a document which is in the printers' hands. It was promised me by two o'clock to-day (it is now nearly half-past three) and it has not yet come; but if the Committee would receive it presently or in the course of to-morrow I could place it in their hands this evening, and then be examined upon it to-morrow, because it gives the whole particulars of a scheme for the whole country, worked out by our committee, which they believe would settle this question of the unemployed.

Friday, 1st March 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Acland.
Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. Billson.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Mather.
Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.
Mr. John Wilson (Govan).

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. A. F. HILLS, M.A., re-called; and further Examined.

Chairman.

2567. YOU have circulated, I think, among the members of the Committee, as was arranged, copies of a sketch Bill for providing for the economical administration of relief?—I have.

2568. Would you like to give the Committee some explanation of the general principles upon which that Bill is founded?—I should. There are two points I was specially asked, by my committee, to urge upon you, which I will mention before I commence any exposition of this proposed Bill. The first is that I should ask members of the Committee, if they would be so good, to come down and see our relief works on Wanstead Flats in operation, as our committee is strongly of opinion that if this Committee would one day come down and see the works in practical operation they would see a good deal of the practical side, which is perhaps better than only hearing the theoretical side, and would be able to form a better opinion on the subject. The second point which my committee has asked me to impress upon you is a point which, no doubt, the Committee are already themselves possessed of, that it is practically impossible to provide any valuable assistance for the present season; that these works have to be carefully organised months ahead, and that any grant of State moneys at the present moment would, in their opinion, be worse than useless. Those are the two points I was specially asked to bring before the Committee's notice. With regard to the proposals in the Bill which I have to lay before you I must apologise that they have been very hastily framed, so far as the drafting and printing are concerned, for they were only put in hand less than 36 hours ago, and I must, therefore, ask you to excuse any little verbal alteration that I may have to make as we go through the Bill owing to the want of time for revision. This question of the unemployed is essentially a complex one; it is complex in its causation, in

Chairman—continued.

the variety of causes which produce poverty and want of employment; and it is consequently complex in its responsibility, and the proposals which are made in this draft Bill recognise that complex responsibility. It is, first of all, a national question, we believe, because it is due to many causes, such as the state of trade, which is the result of a variety of conditions, the national government, questions of currency, questions of the habits of life of the people, and such questions as those relating to the use of intoxicating liquor. There are many causes, and some amongst them are national causes, and therefore these proposals recognise that part of the responsibility is national. But it is also local; it depends a great deal upon the administration in the locality where there is this special poverty and distress, as to which evidence has been given in this room. There are some parts of London where this distress in the winter time is specially liable to occur. Then, lastly, the responsibility is individual, because there can be no doubt that the final and supreme responsibility rests upon the individual, whether they are in a state of prosperity or not. There may be many causes, of course, tending to the depression of the individual; but the final factor in the situation is the strength of character; the probity and the excellence of the individual himself. In putting these proposals before you, I have gone into that distinction in order that you may realise that in these proposals we are determined to recognise this triple responsibility of the State, the local authority, and the individual. The provisions made are that the responsibility should be shared by those three parties and the determining person in the whole arrangement is made, the person who gives freely and without necessity. The whole idea is that the charitable public should be brought into this system, and should be generally encouraged to assist, an encouragement that there has been a tendency of late a great

Chairman—continued.

deal to diminish. The action of very many societies of late has been rather to show that all giving is likely to do more harm than good, and the result is that the public pocket has been buttoned up, not of ill-will, but because the public were afraid that they did more harm than good by giving. On the other hand, there are agencies constantly in motion tending to extract from the public pocket money for immediate eleemosynary assistance, and the result is we have funds started by evening papers, which, in my opinion, are doing a tremendous lot to demoralise the district in which they are administered; the money comes in in large sums to be given away, and, to take my own district of West Ham, concurrently with the relief work we have been administering, we have had free doles of provisions, and free doles of soup and groceries, which are given to anyone who came to ask for them. A certain amount of money has been sent to be administered in the district, and that money has to be got rid of. The result is, in our district (and no doubt it is the same in other districts, but I will speak only of my own knowledge), that very often there has been more money to be given away than there were immediate applicants for, and the result has been that there has been money given in many cases without sufficient inquiry. To give you a gross instance: they have been giving doles of threepenny-worth of groceries to anybody who came to ask for them, and great complaint was made at the end of the week by the local tradesmen that the grocery accounts were practically *nil* that week, simply because of the gifts of groceries which were made through these well-intentioned but economical immoral gifts of money collected by one of the evening newspapers.

2569. By whom was that done?—Perhaps I had better not mention the name.

2570. By one of the newspapers on its own account?—By one of the newspapers. It was done with the best of motives, I have no doubt, but with that result. The charitable giver wants encouragement and education. If there is a proper system through which he can give his money so that there is proper administration, there is no reason at all why the charitable giver should not give freely, and very largely assist the whole problem. The original suggestion of this Bill, therefore, is that in every district the charitable public should be invited to subscribe towards the relief of the unemployed and of the poor. The second part of the fund is proposed to come from the local authority, either from the board of guardians or from the local Council; and the remaining part of the fund comes from the Exchequer of the State. I ought now, I think, to describe to you the attitude of these proposals towards the problem of poverty itself. The poverty is just as complex as the responsibility for its causation. There are two large classes of poor who have to be considered, the worthy poor, I use the epithet quite generally, and the unworthy poor. Those are the two main classes into which they may be divided, and those two classes sub-divide themselves into the competent and the incompetent. Dealing with the unworthy poor first, it seems to me quite clear that the incompetent unworthy poor must be treated by the Poor-law system as it stands, and should be accompanied by that very disability which the Poor-law now contains, that is, a certain mark and sign of that failure in life which necessarily brings its own Nemesis. As regards the competent, able-bodied unworthy poor there is at present no machinery for dealing with them. We do not profess to do so in the proposals which we now make, but we say that there should be some machinery, and it might be very well made a county machinery, provided power were created by Act of Parliament, that would enable such men to be sent to some labour colony, where, if they did not work, they should not be fed, so that they should be absolutely compelled to enter upon a new and better mode of life, very much on the same lines as the labour colonies of other countries. The main points which this Bill professes to deal with are the worthy poor, that is, the competent worthy poor and the incompetent worthy poor. For the incompetent there is already the practical machinery of charity all over the country, and that only needs strengthening and co-ordinating in order to make it a very efficient machinery for the present. What the Charity Organization Society has been doing all over the country has been most valuable in our opinion, so far as it goes.

Chairman—continued.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

2571. You are referring now to private charitable societies, I understand?—I am referring to the Charity Organization Society's operations in relation to private charity.

2572. In speaking of the agency that now does deal with the incompetent worthy poor, do you mean private charity?—Precisely. We suggest there should be formed a charitable committee, or a charitable relief district, which should be administered by a joint committee of the Poor-law authorities and public charitable subscribers. With regard to the able-bodied competent worthy poor (that is really the critical question in the problem which this Committee has to deal with, and which I hope it will be able to solve), that is, men who are able and willing to work, but who, through stress of the market are unable to secure work, we suggest that there should be created relief by giving them employment. There should be a district created which should be called the Employment Relief District, and that should be administered by a Joint Committee, consisting of the local authority (either the County Council, the Borough Council, or the Vestry, or the Board of Works, whatever may happen to be the local authority who administers at present the sanitary and other operative functions of the districts) and subscribers to charitable funds. At the back of that comes the guarantee of the State. The suggestion is that the State guarantees to each of these charitable committees as much as they can severally subscribe—that is to say, the aggregate amount provided by public subscription, and the local authority's subscription, with this limit: that it should not exceed 1*l.* per centum of the population of the district. I ought to point out that the idea is that the administration should be local—that the monetary guarantee should be national, but that that guarantee

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley*—continued.

guarantee should not exceed 1*l.* per centum of the population for charitable purposes, or 1*l.* per centum of the population for employment purposes.

Chairman.

2573. Is it not more than a guarantee; it is a contribution or subsidy, is it not?—Yes; I beg pardon, "contribution" is the right word. The same proposal applies to the charitable relief part of the work; namely, that the State should make a subsidy of an equal amount of the aggregate subscriptions of the local authority and the charitable public together, but not to exceed 1*l.* per centum of the population. That deals, I think, subject to such information as the questions put to me may subsequently bring out, with the financial basis of this scheme. Then we come to, perhaps, a more difficult part of the scheme, and that is the work which can be provided, and the administration which is necessary for the carrying out of such work in different parts. With regard to the charitable part of the scheme, I think it is sufficiently obvious. The Charity Organization Society has developed methods of organisation sufficiently throughout the country, so that people are fairly well aware of the best means of investigating cases of distress, and of administering charity to those in need. But with regard to employment relief, that is a novelty; a thing that has not been hitherto recognised; and it requires very careful administration. My own opinion is that the whole possibilities of this scheme depend entirely upon the wise administration in carrying out the works. It is quite easy for the State to find the money; it is equally easy for the local authority to find the money; but it is very difficult to see that the works, when started, are useful works, and are being properly carried out. And here we come to the point of division, as you will remember, that separated the West Ham Relief Committee from the West Ham Town Council. The point we insisted on was that no more money should be paid in wages than was earned by the men upon the work, with the one condition that they were to have the minimum rate of wages, which should be considerably less than the standard rate in the district. If you will turn to the rules at page 5, you will see the suggestion in this Bill is in sub-section 5 of clause 7: "Every scheme for employment relief shall provide—(a) That no person shall be employed on relief works for more than six days of six hours each in any week or (subject as hereinafter mentioned) at a rate of wages exceeding two-thirds of the current rate of wages in the district." That clause, I believe, is the gist of the whole of these proposals, and the next sub-section (b) is very nearly as important: "That the work shall be pieced at market rates, and properly measured up, and that any balance of profits shall be paid to those who have earned it in proportion to the wages earned by them and in addition to their wages"; and the last sub-section is: "That the relief works shall be for the benefit of the district or the inhabitants thereof." Clause (b) institutes what is practically a novel system of administering work. It is a system that was originally experimented upon in our own shipbuilding works, and it is a system which might, I believe, be applied with advantage to all the industrial concerns of the country. It is a sort of cross-breed between the trade union requiring the trade union rate of wages and the old English system of carrying on work on piece work, it insists upon the minimum rate, so that everybody can have a certain amount of money as a daily wage, but, at the same time, it gives every one an opportunity of earning more by piecing the work, and saying that if they earn more than that minimum amount they shall be paid what they earn.

Chairman—continued.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

2574. Is that in respect of overtime?—No, it has nothing to do with the question of overtime, it is simply and solely a question of payment for the work done. Then I should like to call the Committee's attention to the provision that "no person shall be employed on relief works for more than six days of six hours each in any week." The opinion of my committee (and in that we are strongly supported by the Mansion House Conference of last year) is that any work of this kind to be valuable should be continuous, and when a man is once put on this employment it should be carried on without intervals of two or three days, and that he should be kept to the employment as long as he asks for it. It is very strongly our opinion that work should be provided for every honest, capable man so long as he should require it, whether it be in the winter or in the summer. That is the basis of the whole of these proposals. These proposals are not at all made as a suggestion for overcoming the immediate stress, or a state of things brought about with the thermometer falling below freezing point or down to zero; but they are to meet what may be called chronic trade disease when there are a large number of men out of employment—it does not matter whether it be in winter or in summer; it is just as necessary that the man should have work, and that he and his family should be fed. We believe that were some well-organised system instituted which should require that these men should work, coupled with a very strict exacting test to see that they did the work, we should be building up the *morale* of the working classes, and we should be assisting the men at times of real need, and making a sort of channel by which they might be restored to the ordinary channels of trade. This system does not propose to interfere with, but it proposes to maintain all the existing industrial arrangements of the country. Our idea is that the industrial arrangements of the country which have grown up during a long course of centuries are suitable to our needs, and that what we want is to encourage them and not, as has been suggested by some of the witnesses, to revolutionise society and destroy all the existing industrial arrangements of the country. But, in order to do that, it is clear you must draw a very clear and deep line of demarcation between industrial payments and assisted payments, as I prefer to call them, for I will not call them relief payments, because that word has become rather impregnated with the idea of charity—it is not charity here that we are talking of at all—it is simply payment for work

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

done—it is absolute employment of men who have got out of work because of the conditions of the market. But in order to carry this out successfully it is quite clear that it must apply to all the country, because if special conditions are set up in West Ham, for instance, or in any other town where men know that they will get a certain amount of subsistence, the immediate result would be that the place would be flooded with all the loafers and vagabondage of the country; but, on the other hand, if you make it universal that tendency immediately ceases. If you make the administration local, you get it carried out by the people who know the district, and who probably would know the applicants who apply. All that you have to do, then, is to see that the conditions of employment are fair, and give encouragement to the men to do better when the conditions of trade are changed. I should like to tell the Committee of our experience at West Ham during the last three months, because that has been very encouraging in that direction; good men have come on to us who have been out of work for two or three months; very often when they have come they have been weak from want of food. We have at our shelter a kitchen, and so they get breakfast before they go to work, and dinner in the middle of the day; and the result of working out on the land for a week has very often been to make the difference between a bad man at the beginning of the week and a good man at the end. Men coming on weak from want of food have at the end of the week been practically fit to do a good day's work. And there is also this fact: the men are grouped into small squads of from 10 to 20 men, with a leading man put in charge of each squad. These men are able to see who are the good workmen, and by careful administration and watching, by constantly refining, they get up the best men. We find that out of every 100 men we are pretty sure to get 20 who are really first-class men. We have been able to recommend these men, and pass them on to other people when they are in want of hands, and they are very glad to take them from us, as they know we are in a position to say, by testing them by a few weeks' work, that they are really men to be relied upon; and the same result would apply elsewhere, I presume. The result is that we have been able to pass on men to employment who otherwise might have been out of employment for months longer. Then, with regard to the piecing and piece prices, a member of the Committee asked me yesterday how these prices were fixed. We suggest that they should be fixed by the authority which administers the scheme—they are very easily fixed—they are very well known in every district, because the Committee will observe it is very simple work that we propose these men should undertake. I ought to say at this point, perhaps, that these proposals do not contemplate any elaborate works at all; it is only the simplest kind of work—such as digging and levelling, trenching and ditching.

Chairman.

2575. And reclaiming?—Possibly reclaiming also; but such work as digging and excavating and carting would all be the simplest kind of work, which could be easily measured and tested. I will come to the abundance of such work by-and-bye if it is desired. These district rates, as I say, are very easily ascertained, and they might be made a little more liberal in cases of this kind, because you would sometimes have old men and infirm men to deal with, and then you can see in the course of the week whether a man is doing his best or not. In West Ham we have been compelled to establish a minimum amount of work that a man must do in order to get employment relief; that is to say, if a man does not dig a rod of land in a day, we tell him that he will not be employed another day. I may say that an ordinary farm hand will dig from seven to nine rods a day, so that you will see it is not a large requirement, but out of 50 men coming in in that way perhaps 30 will not dig a rod a day at first.

2576. Those would be men who had not been accustomed to that sort of work?—People unaccustomed to this work can after three days, if they choose to work, dig a rod a day—that is my opinion, from seeing the work that has been done at West Ham. That is a sort of thing that could be easily ascertained, and the minimum could be easily altered if required.

Mr. *Bolton.*

2577. Do I understand that a man is sent away if he does not do that minimum amount?—Yes.

2578. And then do you not take him on again?—Not for a month, and then if he comes and still does not do the work he cannot come on again for three months, and then if he comes and does not do the work he cannot come on for a year. It is a thing that could be easily ascertained, and each centre could devise its own rules so long as efficient administration was maintained.

Mr. *John Burns.*

2579. The character of the soil would be taken into consideration, I suppose, too?—Yes, I am speaking of easy soil.

2580. What depth are they required to dig?—They have to dig it one spit and turn it over, that is nine or ten inches. Then as to the character of the work that can be done. The work that we have been doing in West Ham is a little exceptional, because there we happen to have 180 acres within an easy walk of the borough, so that we have a quantity of waste land which we can put the people upon to make pitches for cricket and football, and so on. Of course, in a rural district there is always plenty of land, but in congested districts, in towns, it might not be so easy to find suitable land. I should suggest that in a district like Chelsea, or Westminster, or St. Pancras, where there is no waste land handy, an arrangement should be made with the nearest district for securing land either by purchase or hire, and that digging should be done there. As to the nature of the work, of course, that is a matter that could be amplified by later experience; but I should suggest digging for the

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

the purposes of potato-growing for districts all round London, because that is a thing that is simple to do, and it is easy to measure up, and you have got some value for it when it is done—that is to say, every crop of potatoes would produce more value than the cost of the work upon it. Then, of course, there is this advantage in taking the very simplest operation, that you can employ all men upon it without any difficulty. If you give the men work, such as paving or bricklaying, or any of the more difficult skilled operations, you have to train them for months before they are able to do the work; but if you put a man with a spade in his hand on the land for a week he must be a very poor worker if he does not after a few times work sufficiently well for the purpose I am describing. The question of the cost of getting the men to their work comes in, of course; but I do not think it is a serious matter. At present, the Great Eastern Railway run their trains to Walthamstow at 2*d.* a-head, and I think even to Enfield, and the railways would easily get the men into the districts that have plenty of land. For instance, round the north of London you have Harrow and Pinner, and all that district, and on the south, round Camberwell, there is an equally good district; and on the east we have Hackney Marshes and Wanstead Flats—so that, practically, all round London there is a fringe of territory within easy railway communication, where men could be taken at very little cost. The work we are speaking about commences at 9 o'clock in the morning, when the trains would be running back without many passengers, and if the county authority made an arrangement with the railway companies I think they would be ready enough to take 100 or 300, or 500 men, as the case might be, at an all-round sum of 1*d.*, or perhaps 2*d.* at the outside. That arrangement would have this great advantage, that you would be taking the men out of the congested districts of London, where they are hanging about gin-palaces, and living under the worst possible conditions, and you would remove them for five or six weeks during the winter right out into the country into the open air; you would set them to a very simple task; you would have them sent down in the morning in great bodies together to work and brought back at night, and while you would give them a minimum rate of wage, which would be less than the market rate of the district, they would have an opportunity of earning more if they desired it. As a means of education and training it would be perfectly invaluable to the somewhat debilitated populations in our large towns. The very fact of being out in the open air for so many days would be the making of many of them, and you would at once get rid of all the cadging and hanging about in the streets, which is one of the worst features of the present system. I can give you a gross case which occurred a fortnight ago in our town of West Ham. A body of 12 men happened to come by our relief works, where our men were working on Wanstead Flats. They were coming in from East Ham, where they had been making a collection, crying: "Got no work to do," and all that sort of thing. They were able-bodied men, and they were walking along singing at the top of their voices.

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

When they got opposite our men, who, as I say, were working, they began to hoot them, and abuse them, and call them blacklegs, because they were working for less than 6*d.* an hour. After a while they passed on, and when they got into West Ham the police took them before the magistrates for begging. The case was enquired into, and it was found that those 12 men had 17*l.* in their possession, which they had collected in the streets from charitable people by representing that they had got no work, and all the rest of it. Can you conceive anything more demoralising than that these men should go about hooting those who were doing work, and collecting such a sum as that—more than 1*l.* a head, by asking people for money in the streets? That is the danger we are in at present.

Chairman.

2581. Were those 12 men collecting the money for themselves, or on behalf of a larger number?—For themselves only. We have another case down in West Ham where a publican has prepared sheets for subscriptions from the charitable public, and men have been sent out by the publican to cadge from the charitable public. He has paid them 10*s.* a-day, and given them so much in beer, and the men have brought back the results of the collection to the public-house. That is about the most demoralising process you could conceive of, and yet that is the sort of thing that is encouraged by the perfectly childish notions which have been brought forward, with, no doubt, the best intentions, by some of the witnesses here on the last two or three days. You had the suggestion that it does not matter whether a man earns what he is paid or whether he does not. There is a tendency to divorce ethics from economics, and to assume that there is an ethical standard independent of the economical standard. We believe that is entirely a mistake, and that the more absolute the economical standard is the more absolute will be the ethical standard, and that it is necessary that these somewhat visionary schemes should be checked, as they are likely to lead to very great disaster.

Mr. *Benn.*

2582. You said something about those men engaged on relief works being fed; do you propose to provide food in addition to the wages?—No, they pay for the food.

2583. The feeding would be dependent upon the payment they receive at the end of the week, would it?—They get bread for a halfpenny and soup for a halfpenny, so that for a penny a man can get a meal.

Mr. *Wootton Issacson.*

2584. Do you provide shelters on the works?—We have two very fine shelters, where they have a fire.

Mr. *Logan.*

2585. Your suggestion, as I understand, is that the whole of the country should follow the example which you are now setting at West Ham?—I do not want them to follow any example. I am merely putting before the Committee suggestions which,

Mr. *Keir-Hardie*—continued.

gested, be less than those resulting from the present system of precarious charity through the country in your opinion?—I can only say again, that in my opinion it is a mistake to set machinery to work before it is created, which is what you are proposing.

2614. Which of the two would give the better result?—I cannot answer that further than by giving my own opinion, as I have done.

Mr. *David Randell.*

2615. Do you think the system of relief under this Bill would be of a character honourable to the recipient, and would not tend to injure his self reliance?—Certainly. The whole object of the proposal is to maintain the independence of the workman—to make him give back in work what he earns in wages.

Mr. *Benn.*

2616. As to the method of payment which you suggest—you seem opposed to paying what is known as the recognised rate of wages?—Yes, for this assisted employment.

2617. Do you not think that it would be better to reduce the hours rather than to reduce the rate of payment?—You must reduce both, in my opinion.

2618. You are familiar, perhaps, with the system adopted by the Mansion House Committee on the Abbey Mills scheme?—Perfectly.

2619. Your suggestion, as I understand it, is to give continuous employment?—Yes.

2620. Do you not think it would be better to give a man work three days a week, paying him the recognised rate, and making him shift for himself for the other three days, so as to get him back into his ordinary channel of work?—No; I think that is one of the very worst conditions you can adopt, because it just suits the man who does not want to work—he can come on for a day or two, and then go off for a day or two.

2621. I understood the main object of this plan was to get men back into ordinary channels of work?—Certainly; but we do not begin our work until 9 o'clock in the day, and we work until 12, and then we begin again at 1 and go on until 5, so that a man has from 7 o'clock until 9 in the morning and from 5 to 7 in the evening (which are just the hours when the men are generally looking out for employment) to seek for other employment.

2622. If a man is sent off the first thing in the morning to Hackney Marshes or to some place like that surely he has no time, prior to his excursion to Hackney Marshes, to go round and seek work?—Certainly; that is what men are always doing round our place.

2623. Your idea is that continuous employment does not prevent a man from getting into his ordinary work?—I can only say, as a matter of fact, that the men working on Wanstead Flats have opportunities in the mornings and in the evenings and the whole of Saturday afternoons to find work; and if there is any work waiting for them they know of it, and can get it.

Chairman.

2624. Do you find that they actually do so?—Yes, they do so continually. Men come to us when we have got a week's work for them, and say: "I cannot work to-morrow; I have found employment."

Mr. *Benn.*

2625. I understood your recommendation was that a squad of men should be paid the reduced rate of wages, and then if they succeeded in doing more work than was represented by that money, the margin of profit should be distributed among them?—Yes.

2626. Supposing you had a squad of 20 men and five weaklings among them who were not able to work up to the standard of the remaining 15, how would you adjust the division of the money at the end of the week?—We should remodel the squad the next week, and remove the worst men out.

2627. But as regards the week's work which had been already done, what would you do?—We should not do anything; we should take it as it came.

2628. If the strong men protested against the unfair division they would have to put up with it?—Yes, for that week; the strong would have to bear the burdens of the weak for once.

Chairman.

2629. I think you told the Committee that you gradually sifted and grouped the workers as the work went on?—Yes, we do.

Mr. *Benn.*

2630. In that case you would eventually get all the weaklings in one squad and all the strong men in another?—Precisely.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

2631. I understand you put forward your plan as applicable to the whole of the Metropolis?—Certainly.

2632. You would probably agree that there are districts in London where the pressure from want of employment is greatest in which the residents generally are poor?—That is so.

2633. And you would also, perhaps, agree with me that in the same districts it often happens that the rates are very high?—Precisely.

2634. With regard to such districts, the basis of the relief fund, whether for employment or for charity, would be the voluntary subscriptions. As I understand, you do not get any fund without the basis of voluntary subscription?—No.

2635. Voluntary subscription is the basis of the whole scheme?—Yes.

2636. Now, following that up, confining your attention to these poor districts, from what source do you anticipate that the voluntary subscriptions would be derived?—I must point out that the idea is that it should be worked by the counties, and, therefore, if you take the Metropolis or the County of London, you would have the subscriptions of the whole of London as your financial basis.

2637. I did not understand that that was the scheme: is it or is it not true that the fund raised or contributed in any particular district would be exclusively spent in that district?—Up to the limit of the contribution of the district they must spend that amount in the district;

Mr. *Pickersgill*—continued.

district; but more might be given by the central fund.

2638. You contemplate taking London as a whole?—Precisely.

Mr. *Bolton.*

2639. That is not the Bill?—I think so. Will you point out to me in what respect it is not so in the Bill?

Chairman.

2640. On the top of page 2, it says: "Every Poor-law union situate wholly in one administrative county, and where a union is situate in two or more counties, such part thereof as is situate in each county shall be a charitable relief district for the purposes of this Act."—That is referring to the charitable part of the scheme.

Mr. *Bolton.*

2641. Take the case of an urban district other than a borough, which is referred to in the next clause?—That is for administration.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

2642. If you will turn to page 5, sub-section 3, of clause 7, it says: "The necessary expenses of a central committee shall be paid out of the relief funds under their control in proportion to the amount of those funds." If it is to be treated as one scheme, I do not see the necessity or desirability of that provision?—Surely it is only fair that the expenses of the central administration should be proportional to the fund received from the different districts.

2643. Yes, if you accept the principle that each of the districts is to receive, and receive only, the fund contributed in that district; but I understand that is not the Bill?—If you will refer to clause 6, sub-section 3, you will see that: "Subscribers to an employment relief fund, or to a charitable relief fund, may either subscribe to the fund generally, or may appropriate their subscriptions to relief in any rural parish in the employment or the charitable relief district, as the case may be." That shows that you may have two sets of funds, a central fund and a local fund, and the provision is that where the funds are local that amount must be spent in the locality. Take the case of a small hamlet or a town where the subscriptions are coming out of the county, it is fair that if people subscribe to that fund they should have the benefit of their subscriptions. It is to be at least to that amount; and, supposing that it is a poor district, the central authority have power to give more. For instance, to take West Ham, we are one of the poorest districts of London, and we have these relief works down in West Ham, and the people subscribing are in London, very often in the West End it may be. It is obviously fair that it should not all fall on West Ham.

Mr. *John Burns.*

2644. But you are not in London at present?—We soon shall be.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

2645. May I call attention to sub-section 1, of clause 6, which says:—"Subject to schemes to be approved by and to the control of the Central Committee established by this Act an Employment Relief Fund" (which I understand to be the relief fund raised in the particular locality) "shall be administered by the joint committee"?—Yes; but you have made an assumption which is not correct, namely, that the relief fund there referred to is the local relief fund; it is not necessarily the local fund—it is partly the local fund and partly the central fund.

2646. Then, as I understand it, the joint committee of the district in London would not merely administer the fund that was raised in relation to that district, but whatever in addition was placed at its disposal by the central fund.

2647. Did I understand you to suggest that Hackney Marshes should be used for growing potatoes?—I do not think I did; I suggested the growing of potatoes round London. I did not specify the Hackney Marshes, but I do not know why they should not be grown there.

2648. Are you aware that the Hackney Marshes is devoted to the use of the public for ever?—I had not that in my mind. Then probably you would make cricket and football grounds there, as we are doing on Wanstead Flats.

Mr. *Benn.*

2649. Have you seen the allotments of the London County Council at the Isle of Dogs, which are very interesting?—I have not.

Mr. *Logan.*

2650. The foundation of your scheme, I gather, is the assumption that you would get money's worth in work for the money you pay?—Precisely.

2651. And you said that arrangements would have to be made to see that the men did the work properly. You also spoke of taking men out of London by trains to country places where work would be found for them. As the assumption upon which you start is that you are to get this work out of the men, do you intend to use the law, or what means do you intend to adopt, to make the men work or to compel the men to go out of the towns in these trains that you provide?—Of course, we could not compel them to go out to the work. It would be, of course, limited to those who do apply to go to work. If they do not apply it would be obvious that they would not want assistance.

2652. Supposing you got a man down to the works, and when he got there he would not work, what would you do?—We should send him away.

2653. You say, in Clause 7 of your Bill, that the rate of wages shall not exceed two-thirds of the current rate of wages in the district; are you aware that in some districts agricultural labourers are working to day for 9*s.* a week?—Yes.

2654. Do you seriously propose that a man should do an hour's work on 2*d.*?—Precisely.

2655. Do you think it is possible?—Certainly; if he can do it on 3*d.* he can do it on 2*d.* What you have to do is to get up the level of the rate of wages in the district.

Mr. *Logan*—continued.

2656. You think a man can do an hour's work for 2*d.*?—Yes; it is a very bad state of affairs, but you must devote your energies to raising the rate of wages of the district; that is the remedy.

2657. Would not a man be able to maintain himself better on, say, half that amount given by charity instead of slaving to earn the amount you provide?—No, I do not agree with you at all.

2658. Supposing that this Bill which you seem to foreshadow might be passed by Parliament is not passed (and it obviously cannot be passed for this winter), would you think that supposing a short Act were passed repealing the enactment which now imposes disqualification for the temporary receipt of out-door relief, that would, to a great extent, meet the matter for the rest of this winter?—No; I think it would be one of the worst things you could possibly do, because it would break down the whole of the moralising influences of the Poor-law. One of the reasons why men do not come for relief in that way is because they do not want the discredit of losing their vote, and it is a good thing to keep up that feeling on their part.

2659. You would have the men starve rather than break down that feeling?—No, I make this suggestion for giving employment.

2660. Do you think that a man is more likely to be independent, or maintain his moral fibre, if he is kept alive by his neighbours than if he were able to go to the authorities and ask for relief, which he would do if it did not carry with it this disqualification?—I do not know what you mean by being "kept alive by his neighbours."

2661. In lots of agricultural districts to-day agricultural labourers are being kept alive by charitable doles from the squire of the district, and, in my judgment, anything more pernicious you could not have in the country?—It is equally true that in poor districts farmers keep on men in the winter out of respect for the men when they are not really wanted. You are attacking the institutions of the country.

2662. Do not you think that if the strictness of the conditions upon the receipt of out-door relief were temporarily relaxed it would be better than allowing a man to be fed by his neighbours?—I think it would be one of the most demoralising things you could do.

Mr. *Lawrence.*

2663. You said that at present many employers keep on men at slack times. Will they not more promptly send them on to a common fund when it exists?—That is possible.

2664. Would not such a fund as this practically form a sort of insurance fund for improvident men, and really supplement wages and permit wages to be paid out of which a man cannot save?—I do not think that would be the case at all—it would act as an insurance fund, in this way, and that is a good feature of it, that no man would feel himself at the peril of the Poor-law in case he could not get work. One of the most terrible things about the present system is that a competent man may by some chance of the market be thrown, practically, into the poor-house. This scheme would average the work of the country and give a man

Mr. *Lawrence*—continued.

that insurance which is necessary to make a man steady. One of the reasons, to my mind, why there is so much drunkenness and so much lightness of character is that men are never certain how long they can look for work, or what is going to happen to them two days hence.

2665. If a man knew that this fund would be in existence if he happened to be out of work in the winter, would he not be ready to receive less wages in summer, because this fund would supplement his wages and enable him to live without having to put by in the summer?—I heard the honourable Member put a similar question to a witness the other day, and I thought his reply was very good; that that was an argument that cuts both ways. If a man had not any work it is much more likely that he will accept a lower wage out of necessity than if he has something behind him. If a man is earning 4*d.* an hour in the winter instead of being out of work, he is more likely to earn 6*d.* an hour during the summer; and I think that in order to build up a man's self-respect you must give him more certainty of employment.

2666. If a man has not got to keep himself in the winter he can surely take less wages in the summer?—No, I do not agree; I do not think he would do so.

2667. Why should private residents in a district subscribe to such a fund which only benefits employers or employed, and is calculated to add to the rates in the neighbourhood?—It would reduce the rates if you took people away from the poor rates.

2668. If the attractions to a locality were enhanced where this fund was started (and you allow that some of the localities would not start it), clearly the rates would go up?—I have not said that some of the localities would not start it; I believe that every locality would gladly start it.

2669. Does not your scheme postulate that there will always be necessary works, whereas many districts are fully equipped and cannot find genuine work. I think you have said that the work must be genuine?—Yes.

2670. Some districts are so fully equipped that there is practically, as we heard, for instance, from Mr. Hilleary in regard to West Ham, no work that the authorities want to indulge in?—That is quite true.

2671. There must be plenty of districts where there is no genuine work to be found. What would you do in those districts?—By degrees we should hope to populate those districts, and gradually get the men back upon the land again. Our hope is that ultimately the waste parts of the country will be brought back again and the people will be working on the land again.

2672. But there must be many urban districts which are fully equipped where there is no chance of their being populated, or no question of that sort, because they are already populated. Take, for instance, a town district?—I have here an analysis of the people who have applied for work at our relief works, and I find that out of 1,400 who have applied only 5 per cent. come from skilled trades and all the rest are common labourers. The whole

Mr. *Lawrence*—continued.

whole point of the question which you are putting to me is directed to skilled tradesmen who would require skilled work, but the difficulty is not largely with the skilled tradesmen at all—it is with the unskilled men that the difficulty arises, and the very simple work which I have suggested would be such as they could very well undertake.

2673. You say, I think, that the work must be genuine, and not merely labour colony work?—Certainly.

2674. Take an urban district, say, for instance, St. Giles'-in-the-Fields. How is work to be found there for these people?—By sending them out.

2675. To a labour colony?—Not to a labour colony, because that would mean residence out of the district, and what I am proposing is that these men should go out to work and return home in the evening.

Mr. *Billson.*

2676. Upon the question of disqualification, would you not make a distinction between a worthy working man who is out of work for a few weeks and the normal pauper?—Certainly, if you could.

2677. I think you said, in reply to Mr. Logan, that it would be an extremely disastrous thing to alter the condition as to disqualification?—I do not know how you can define between a worthy applicant and an unworthy applicant; that is the difficulty.

2678. You are defining it in this Bill?—I test it; I do not know it. The whole machinery of the work brings out the proof.

2679. Could not the guardians test it?—I do not think so; breaking stones is not much of a test of moral worth.

2680. If it could be tested, you do not think the removal of the disqualification would demoralise the men?—If you could do so only in the case of men who were thoroughly respectable and were only temporarily in distress, it would be a very good thing, but I do not think it is possible to draw such a distinction.

Mr. *John Burns.*

2681. I do not intend to ask more than one question at this stage, because one cannot do justice to your proposal under a considerable time; but for the purposes of the Interim Report I would like to ask you, with regard to the condition of West Ham, of which you know a great deal, is private charity organized or not in that district?—It is.

2682. Is there any over-lapping?—Not much, the last two years.

2683. Is there co-operation between the various charitable bodies?—Yes.

2684. You were emphatic in your answer with regard to the demoralising effect of indiscriminate charity. Generally speaking, in regard to the East-end of London, including West Ham, could you say that, under the existing circumstances in the East-end, generally charity has a tendency to curse the recipient rather than to bless him?—Yes, I should say that very strongly from my experience.

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

2685. Would you put it as strongly as this: that if a barrier were erected at Aldgate pump, beyond which no West-end charitable contribution were allowed to go, it would be an advantage to the East-end for the next ten years?—Those pictorial analogues are a little difficult. I should not like to commit myself to such a sweeping statement.

2686. Do you not believe, as a large employer of labour, as a temperance reformer, and as a man interested in unemployed relief schemes, that the indiscriminate private charity of amateurs and philanthropists in the East-end of London does attract to the East-end vagabondage loafers, and an undesirable element from other localities that practically vitiates any honest scheme for dealing with genuine distress?—Yes, I believe that; but I also believe there is some very good administration in the excellent charities in the East-end. I think all amateur administration in charity is demoralising.

2687. You think there is only one thing the East-end wants—namely, charity scientifically and properly organised by the public authority, and private indiscriminate charity absolutely stopped?—I should like to see that.

2688. And work substituted under good conditions in its place?—I should like to see that.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

2689. Knowing you very well, and knowing you to be a very large employer of labour, may I say I do not think anyone is better qualified than yourself to give information with regard to the East-end of London. You said just now you thought the indiscriminate relief by private individuals in the East-end of London did a great deal of harm. Do you allude to those advertisements which appear in the daily Press, by which they get large sums of money for indiscriminate almsgiving?—I should include them. I should think that they have been very injurious to us these last two years.

2690. Have you found any difficulty in getting thoroughly competent men to work in your own shipbuilding business when you required them?—Yes; that is a very important question. Our difficulty is to get the best quality of men; if we could get a better quality of men than we do we should get more work than we do.

2691. May I take it you do find, as a fact, that the men are not as capable as they were years ago?—I cannot answer questions of that kind; but I wish the Committee to understand that there is an enormous number of men who say that they want to work, but when they come to work they do not work, and do not give an efficient return for the money paid to them. I do not believe any really competent workman stays long out of work, or with rare exceptions.

2692. That is your experience?—That is my experience.

2693. You think that a really competent workman has very little difficulty in finding work?—That is my opinion.

Chairman.

2694. He may change his locality, I presume?—Yes; men who have left our employment—good men, whom we were sorry to lose—have,

Chairman—continued.

before they were two days out, found employment elsewhere again and again.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

2695. Supposing you fail to obtain an order for a ship, and have to discharge 1,500 or 1,800 men, do you think that those men could easily get employment elsewhere?—I do not say they would easily get employment, because, throwing upon the market such a number as 1,500 men, that number would not be taken up at once, of course, but they would be soon absorbed.

2696. They would not be a class of men who would go on the relief fund of such a scheme as you have been speaking of?—I do not think you would find many of them do so.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

2697. Would not their absorption displace a similar number somewhere else?—Yes, but of a worse quality.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

2698. With regard to your scheme, may I take it that you would require a paid executive in every locality where the scheme was in force?—No, you might possibly want an engineer for a county, or group of counties, but no other paid executive, and I think you would probably use the borough or county officials.

2699. With regard to what is called foreshore work at the seaside, we know there are a great many very poor districts where they have not the means of keeping the foreshore in proper order, and we know perfectly well that a good many thousands of men could be very advantageously employed in carrying out that work at the present time; would you propose to form colonies for doing that under your scheme?—No; personally, I should think it would be a very dangerous experiment, because directly you have a large class of men resident in a district that is not their home, when the work is over you have the same problem over again in an accentuated form.

2700. Supposing you did draft down large numbers of men round the English coast for foreshore work, how would you get the men down there and keep them there?—Each county would have to devise a scheme for itself, and I would not express an opinion till I saw the absolute scheme upon its merits. I should be very chary of putting a large number of men, say 1,000 or more, upon a reclamation scheme unless it was very well considered beforehand.

2701. Is it not the fact that the unionist rate of wages is higher in West Ham than it is in other parts of the country?—That is so, in London generally.

2702. Can you tell the Committee how much higher it is?—For instance, in London it is 6*d* for labourers, and at Barrow, or Belfast, it is 4*d*. On the Clyde it is 4¾*d*. for labourers.

2703. What is it for skilled artisans?—There are a variety of rates; I have the figures here, but probably I need not give them, as they can be very easily obtained through the Labour Department of the Board of Trade.

2704. You have had a great deal of experience have you not, with regard to the labour movements and the cause of this distress; is it not the fact in rural districts that farmers maintain their men on their farms when they do not want them in order to keep them off the rates?—I believe that is so.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

2705. Your scheme would find work, would it not, for all those men by which the rates would be ultimately lowered?—I should hope so.

2706. You propose to give these men 4*d*. an hour for six hours a day; I believe that is the scheme?—You must understand that 4*d*. is typical of West Ham. If you came to a district where the rate of wages was 4*d*. it would be less than 4*d*., it would be 3*d*.; or if the rate of wages was more than 6*d*. it would be higher.

2707. Taking West Ham, it would be 4*d*.?—Yes.

2708. Are they paid for their work every day or every week?—At the end of every day.

2709. Would they be paid upon the report from the foreman of what amount of work had been executed?—No, they get the 4*d*. an hour in any case. At the end of the week the work is measured, so as to see what they have done; if it is not satisfactory those who are unsatisfactory are discharged.

2710. If this scheme came about you would not propose, I presume, informing the colony that any licensed house should be put upon the property?—I do not make any suggestion as to that.

Mr. *Bolton.*

2711. The basis of your scheme, on which it altogether depends, is the willingness of the public in each locality to subscribe voluntarily towards it, is it not?—That is so.

2712. What is to happen, supposing for some reason or other, because the public are dissatisfied or unwilling or uncharitable, the money was not subscribed?—Then you have the existing machinery.

2713. You spoke of dealing also with the existing machinery by appropriating the Poor-law to those cases of absolute failure in life by dealing in this very drastic way with those who were unworthy but able-bodied?—I should like to see some powers of that kind.

2714. You talked about leaving them to starve?—No, I did not. I said if they did not work they should not be able to eat; but they would not starve—they would begin to work when they found what the result was.

2715. The compulsion behind it all is starvation?—Precisely. "If a man will not work neither shall he eat."

2716. It come to what I said, does it not?—You put it in a very disagreeable form; I should be very sorry to see anybody starve.

2717. That is what it means, does it not?—You must put your own meaning upon it.

2718. How could you construct any practical scheme upon those lines? The next point I want to call your attention to is this: The farms are to be administered by the local authorities, are they not?—That is the idea.

2719. But three-fourths, or at least one half, of these funds come from the State?—Yes.

2720. Therefore, you propose to allow the local authorities to deal with State funds?—Precisely.

Mr. *Bolton*—continued.

2721. Do you think that is conducive to anything like economy or efficient management?—Certainly, very much more than by centralising it.

2722. Do you think that Parliament would listen to any proposal to hand over Imperial funds to be spent by local authorities at their will and pleasure?—They are doing it every day for the Poor-law authorities on a very much larger scale than what I propose.

2723. You spoke of the work to be given in return for the assistance to these men who want work, and you said that it should be so long as the workmen required it?—Yes.

2724. Then it is the establishment of a competitive State system of work, is it not?—No, there is no competition with ordinary industrial employment, because they cannot get more than one-half of the ordinary industrial rate of payment.

2725. Is not certainty of employment a very essential element in considering the value of the employment?—It would tend to make both more certain.

2726. If a man knew he could get six hours work for six days a week regularly, do not you think he would be disposed to set that certainty of employment very largely against the casual employment that he would get from a private employer even at a higher rate of wages?—Not at all. Supposing a man could get six hours a day for a week at 4*d.* an hour, it is quite obvious to me that he would sooner have nine hours a day at 6*d.* an hour, and that, therefore, as soon as he could get ordinary employment he would go back to it.

2727. That is all you would rely upon?—It is all you can rely upon; it is self-interest.

2728. As to the work, I suppose you admit there would be a great number of persons who would seek it?—In the first year or two.

2729. Do you suppose there is a sufficient amount of digging, levelling, trenching, ditching, and reclaiming to be usefully embarked upon to employ these men?—Certainly, abundant.

2730. When you have ditched and trenched the ground and laid it out, what is to be done?—I was suggesting that you cropped the land, and, in that case, you would have work every year.

2731. Do you propose that the men should be employed in cultivating the land as well as preparing it?—Certainly.

2732. That involves skill, does it not?—There is no skill in digging that cannot be learned in a week.

2733. But I mean the cultivation of the land?—That is sufficient cultivation for these purposes.

2734. What do you propose to grow?—Potatoes, in the first instance.

2735. Do you consider that you can grow potatoes consecutively without any other crop?—Certainly, if you transfer to other land; you need not be always upon the same land.

2736. Do you suggest that there should be large potato-grounds laid out all round London. Is that your proposal?—That is what I have suggested.

2737. What would be the effect of that; would not the effect of it be that there would be

Mr. *Bolton*—continued.

enormous crops of potatoes coming in competition with those persons who grow them in market-gardens and in other ways under private adventure?—That might be; but when you consider the enormous amount that is imported, it is a very small matter.

2738. Do not you think the private growers would reasonably complain?—No; I think they would be very glad; it would tend to bring the English market into better repute than it is now.

2739. You say that a market gardener would be glad to find competition next door at the expense of a London parish, or of the State?—No, I do not say that at all. A market-gardener does not necessarily grow potatoes; there are plenty of crops he can indulge in.

2740. Have you any experience of market-gardening?—I have, considerable.

2741. Do you consider that it is practicable to lay out particular areas of ground, to break up marshes—such as Hackney Marshes—and lands of that kind, and put them into potato growing?—Certainly.

2742. All round London?—Yes.

2743. You think that the unemployed, under some system such as you suggest, could be all usefully occupied in growing potatoes round London?—And in other works, as I suggested; they need not all grow potatoes.

2744. Would you recommend that they should go on to any further market gardening?—It would depend upon how we got on with the first stage. I should begin with the early stages first.

2745. Now take, for instance, St. Pancras, which you mentioned, where there are a certain number of unemployed people, would you recommend that St. Pancras should buy or hire land some distance from London, and daily send out a certain number of men to work upon that land?—Yes. St. Pancras is a very good instance, I went to see the Vestry of St. Pancras upon this very proposal about 18 months ago, and I asked what was the amount of money being spent by the Vestry in finding relief employment, and I made a proposal to them to establish relief works in connection with the Vestry. They were very civil, but the Chairman of the Works Committee told me with some pride that it was quite unnecessary to do anything in St. Pancras, that where they had been spending in other years 500*l.* a week, they were then spending 900*l.* a week, and they were quite able to find work out of the rates for all the unemployed in that district. That is a good illustration of the evil that local authorities are doing—they are making work at the expense of the rates for the unemployed—breeding up a population that will look to them for constant employment, and building up the rates at an enormous speed. Such a proposal as I make would bring all that to an end. The proper work for a local authority is to do its local work, and no more.

2746. Is it part of its local work to establish market gardens at a distance from its own district and send people to them, and then to sell the produce of those market gardens in competition with private adventure of a similar character?—This scheme, you will notice, is a combination of the local authority and the charitable public,

Mr. *Bolton*—continued.

leaving the local authority to do its own work.

2747. Are you to have that system, and the Poor-law system, and the local authority doing what St. Pancras, you say, has been doing, all running at the same time?—Precisely.

2748. How does it practically relieve the difficulty if it is merely an additional scheme?—Because it provides employment, which is the difficulty.

2749. Do not you think it would tempt a large number of men to rely upon this for regular work?—That is the whole point. I have been endeavouring to explain that we do not think it attractive enough to draw men from ordinary work in their ordinary industries.

2750. Do not you think it must necessarily have the tendency of producing that competition which working men all over the country would resent and oppose?—I can only say that is not my opinion.

2751. Would it not tend to break down the independence and forethought, and all the encouragements to energy that exist in so many ways among the working population?—You think it is an encouragement to energy to be out of work six months?

2752. I do not think it is an encouragement to energy to be out of work six months, but I think the possibility of being out of work stimulates a man to look for work?—All I can say is that I do not think so at all. I think if a man knows that he has got work he will work better than if he is always standing upon the threshold of starvation.

Mr. *Bartley.*

2753. Why do you think it is absolutely essential for your scheme that the State or the centre of taxation of the country should supply part of the fund?—In the first place, I believe the responsibility is a national one, or partly national, and I think that the State should recognise that.

2754. Do you not see great objections to the State making grants to localities in that way?—No; it is what they are doing already.

2755. How much would West Ham get out of this fund?—Calculating it at 1*l.* per centum of a population with a population of about 250,000, that would be 2,500*l.* for employment relief, and 2,500*l.* for charitable relief.

2756. What additional rate would that represent, supposing you raised it by local rates?—I am afraid I cannot say.

2757. Would it not be about a halfpenny rate?—It would be something very small.

2758. Therefore, the amount you would receive from the State would really represent only a very slight increase to the rate if you raised it by local rate?—But you have the authority of the State; it is the countenance of the State which is the great thing.

2759. You think that is important?—Enormously.

2760. Supposing your scheme be a good one, what difference would it make supposing it were done by the local authority, the guardians, or the district council. Why should they not do just as well as the State?—I can only give you my

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

views. If you have the advantage of the State at your back, everyone recognises that it is an authoritative thing; whereas, if you have merely the County Council or the Town Council at your back, that is liable to be set up every year at an election, and it might be brought in upon an election. We have an instance at West Ham. The action of the West Ham Corporation is an indication of the danger of leaving it in the hands of the local authority. My impression is that the whole thing would break down if it were left to the local authority.

2761. If the local authority are empowered to carry it on on the lines of your scheme, they could only administer it on the lines of your scheme?—I do not quite follow what is the honourable Member's objection to the State helping when they have the responsibility.

2762. My question is, whether you want the State as well as the local authority and the voluntary subscription?—I want to have all three—the State assistance as well as the local fund.

2763. One can easily understand that in a very poor district you might not be able to get local subscribers to raise the money; what would you do then?—Then you would not be able to exercise the machinery.

2764. Then you think the people ought to be left as they are now?—According to this proposal.

2765. You make it an essential feature of your scheme that the rate of wages should be appreciably less than the trades union or ordinary rate?—Yes.

2766. That is an absolute condition?—Yes.

2767. I wish to ask you this: Those who do not work, or work properly, your scheme would absolutely leave to the Poor-law?—That is so.

2768. That you consider an essential part of it?—I think so.

2769. There is to be no philanthropy beyond?—Precisely; you have the charitable scheme lying alongside, but beyond that I should leave it to the Poor-law.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

2770. Can you give the Committee any idea of how many people you have to employ in supervision upon the Wanstead Flats work?—Two.

2771. Only two for the whole of this grouping and classifying and measuring up which you have spoken of?—I ought to say that in each squad of 10 or 20 we choose the best man, and make him the leading man and give him 1*d.* an hour more; but those men are not responsible in the same way as the two I was referring to. There are two foremen practically.

2772. How many people do you employ at Wanstead?—About 180 on a given day.

2773. Was that the greatest number you had on any day?—I think 186 is the biggest number we have had yet on relief works on any day.

2774. You require at Wanstead a residence test of six months, and in your Bill you require a residence test of 12 months; do you think in practical application there is no difficulty about the residence test?—You mean, I presume, in ascertaining the residence.

2775. Yes.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley*—continued.

2775. Yes.—We require that they should bring a letter from some one who knows them and is known in the district, or bring a rent book; that is the sort of evidence we require.

2776. Are you satisfied that you are never cheated?—I do not think it so much matters really, because the test after all is the work they do. When they are once on the work we can measure the work they do, and that is the test. And, of course, if the scheme was universal, the residence test would not matter at all. There would be no reason why the people should go to one district more than another.

2777. They would go to the most liberal district, would they not?—All the districts would be the same.

Mr. *Acland.*

2778. You told us that, supposing a certain number of men had to be discharged for want of work in your own business, a certain number of them, the really competent workmen, would very quickly obtain work?—That is so.

2779. Then the residue who are less competent—I do not like to call them incompetent—vary a good deal in their degree of competency, I presume?—Very much; and I ought to say there is a continual circulation going on in a special industry like ours between London and the out-ports. Men will go from London to Glasgow or Barrow, and so the best men soon get known. Anybody coming from our works would probably bring with him a good reputation to start with. If a man goes to Glasgow and says that he comes from the Thames Ironworks, he would get work if they are busy.

2780. Still, there are a certain number of men of a lower degree of competency?—We employ about 2,000 at present, and two-thirds of the men we employ are men not of the highest skill, and these men, if they are resident in the district and cannot get work in the district, cannot get it elsewhere.

2781. What are the principal causes of the want of greater competency on the part of those men?—It is an incident of the trade. Supposing, for instance, you take a plater, a man who is skilled at finishing plates, he will have several helpers to help him with the plates; so that it is simply that these men are not wanted to do more skilled work.

2782. It has not to do with their own fault, but simply that they are not required for more skilled work?—Precisely.

2783. What becomes of them when they leave employment?—They would probably fall into the ranks of unemployed labour.

2784. I suppose when a man gets out of employment in that way, if he stays out of employment for some time, and suffers at all, when he gets in again he is less fit for your work than when he left you?—That is quite true.

2785. That is one of the reasons why irregularity of employment is such a serious thing in lowering the capacity of the workpeople?—Certainly; you can watch a man gradually descend and get into lower and lower stages of employment and become gradually demoralised.

Mr. *Acland*—continued.

2786. That would apply even to men who may be fully in earnest and desirous of working when they can?—Yes. I have in my mind an Admiralty Inspector of good character who inspected battleships for two or three years; his time expired, and he left the Admiralty, and I met him the other day begging in the street.

2787. The irregularity of employment leads to gradual deterioration?—Yes.

2788. Through no fault of the men themselves?—I cannot quite say that.

2789. In some cases, at any rate?—Yes. The environment is pressing very heavily upon the organism in that case, but, as a rule, the man himself has something to do with it; he would be, for instance, a man of weak character.

2790. You hope your scheme would very much lessen these causes of deterioration?—I am sure it would.

2791. Do you think there are sufficient powers now residing in the local authority to get the land which you propose they should have?—There are a good many Acts giving power to guardians to lease land for the purpose of putting men to certain work.

2792. There is nothing in your Bill upon that subject?—No, but they would rent land in the ordinary way. I do not think there would be any difficulty.

2793. You do not think more powers are required?—They might be given, if it was thought wise.

Chairman.

2794. Do you propose that the land should be bought or leased?—It would be for the Central Council to determine the best way of taking the land.

2795. You said you saw great objections to any large abolition of the Parliamentary disqualification?—That was my own opinion.

2796. For those relieved under your proposal you think it ought to be abolished?—I think it should be then, because you have got a fair check—that is the reason.

2797. You do not object to it if it is applied discreetly and under a system such as this and with proper tests and checks. You object to it if there is anything indiscriminate about it?—Precisely. Of course, there is no disfranchisement under private charity. If you give a sovereign to a man that does not disfranchise him.

2798. I understand you have had some of the unemployed upon your relief works whom you found to be very steady and deserving workmen, and who have been placed out in consequence of the good character they obtained?—Yes.

2799. In what sort of work were they placed out?—On their own original work.

2800. Not upon digging?—No.

Mr. Edward Pitts Fenton called in; and Examined.

Chairman.

2801. You are clerk to the union of St. Olave's?—Yes.

2802. Will you describe to the Committee what that union comprises?—Five parishes: St. John, Horsleydown; St. Thomas, Southwark; St. Mary Magdalene, Bermondsey; St. Olave's, Southwark; and St. Mary, Rotherhithe.

2803. The (what shall I call them?) political divisions are: Bermondsey, Rotherhithe, and what else; part of Southwark?—Part of Southwark. It is really part of the Borough of Southwark.

2804. I think that the guardians of St. Olave's Union opened an out-door labour yard at the beginning of this year?—They did, on the 7th of January, 1895. On the 3rd of January they resolved to open it, and it was actually opened on the 7th of January, the following Monday.

2805. That was before the severe weather set in?—It was.

2806. Was that in consequence of the knowledge that they had obtained as to an excessive amount of distress?—I will not say "an excessive amount," but *an amount* of distress.

2807. What do you attribute that distress, or want of employment, to?—To two things; the decaying industry of the leather trade and tanning, and the want of work at the riverside at that particular time of the year.

2808. Which occurs every year?—Every year.

2809. You had not in previous years had an outdoor labour-yard, had you?—Not for more than eight years.

2810. Did you receive a representation from any persons?—Yes, Sir.

2811. Will you say from whom?—On the 3rd of January a deputation of 20 of the unemployed workmen, stated to be residing in the St. Olave's Union, attended the meeting of the guardians. A man named Wilkes was appointed spokesman, and he stated that great distress prevailed in this district owing to the number of unemployed workmen; that there were at the present time over 2,000 men in Bermondsey who were out of work, and he asked the guardians to open the stone-yard, with a view to relieving, to an extent, the distress existing in the union. After certain questions had been asked and replied to, the chairman of the Board informed the deputation that their request would receive the immediate consideration of the guardians. The deputation then withdrew; and it was immediately moved, seconded, and resolved: "That the outdoor labour yard be opened forthwith, and that negotiations be entered into with the Rotherhithe Vestry, and other local boards in the union, asking them to give out any work of stone-breaking to the unemployed of the union, at proper rates of wages, under conditions which do not involve pauperising"; and a committee was appointed to carry on the negotiations.

2812. Now, have you reason to believe that the distress in the union is increasing?—Yes, Sir.

2813. And what do you attribute that to?—To the want of work in the tanning and leather trades, and the want of work at the docks, wharves, and the river-side generally.

Chairman—continued.

2814. In what sense is the tanning trade decreasing; owing to what circumstances?—Foreign competition.

2815. But is it not also leaving London, and going to other places in England?—Yes, Sir, as well.

2816. Walsall, I think, is one of them, is it not?—Yes, a number of large provincial towns.

2817. Then as to the river side men: you have a large frontage to the river, have you not?—Over five miles.

2818. Have you docks in the union?—Yes, Sir; the Surrey Commercial Docks occupy about two-thirds of the parish of Rotherhithe.

2819. What is the principal trade that they are occupied in?—The import of grain and timber.

2820. Grain and timber?—Yes.

2821. Apart from the frost, is there any increase in the number of men casually or intermittently employed there, or any other circumstance, to increase the number of the unemployed?—I think the number is increasing yearly.

2822. Owing to what circumstance, would you say?—The permanent organisation of work in the docks.

2823. There are a certain number of men permanently employed?—Certainly.

2824. And, therefore, there are fewer casually employed?—That is so.

2825. Is it the case there, as we have heard is the case in other docks, that the shipowners are now more largely employing men to discharge the cargoes of their ships than the dock companies?—I think so.

2826. That is so?—That is so.

2827. And that also causes a more casual employment?—Certainly.

2828. This is the worst time of year there, apart from frost, is it not?—Apart from frost, it is.

2829. From Christmas to April is the slack season there?—That is so.

2830. And, of course, this year the severe weather has greatly accentuated (intensified) that fact?—Yes.

2831. Now, when you opened this labour-yard, what were the regulations you enforced?—Do you mean, Sir, the task of work specially?

2832. Under what conditions did you open the labour-yard; what was the kind of test employed, and what were the conditions of labour?—The labour-yard is open every morning from 10 o'clock until 5 o'clock in the afternoon; half an hour is allowed for dinner. The order, of course, is obtained from the relieving officer before the man is admitted, after due enquiry as to his residence and his circumstances.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

2833. What length of residence is necessary?—A limit of six months. As to any one not having resided in the union for six months, the instructions of the guardians are that they shall not be admitted to the labour-yard.

2834. Was

Chairman.

2834. Was that condition imposed from the first?—For the first two days, Sir, it was not imposed.

2835. Two days only?—Yes. I found the difficulties so great that on the third day, on my own responsibility, I closed the yard, called a special meeting, and reported the matter to the guardians. They took the whole of the circumstances into consideration, and passed certain resolutions.

2836. You say you took this course in consequence of what was happening. What was it that startled you?—The fact that men from other unions and parishes of London were coming into the lodging-houses in the union, sleeping there one night and applying for relief the next morning. The staff of the guardians had not been increased at all, and consequently they were unable to deal with the matter.

2837. What were the men required to do?—They were required to break nine bushels of stone, or pick four pounds of oakum as directed.

2838. And on condition of doing that amount of work, what was the relief that was given?—A single man, and a man and his wife, were to have two days' work per week; a man with a wife and one or two children dependent, was to have three days' work per week; a man and his wife with three or four children dependent, was to have four days work per week; a man with five children or upwards dependent, was to have five days work per week. The relief given was 1*s.* 8*d.* in money, 2 lbs. of meat (or 1 cwt. of coal at the option of the recipient), 4 lbs. of bread, and 4 ozs. of tea per day.

2839. For the days that the work was done?—That is so.

Mr. *Bartley.*

2840. What is supposed to be the money value of that? What do you put the money value of all that at?—1*s.* 10*d.*

2841. An amount equal to the relief given in money?—Twopence more.

Mr. *John Wilson* (*Govan.*)

2842. That is besides the 1*s.* 8*d.*?—Yes, that is besides the 1*s.* 8*d.*

2843. Relief in money, 1*s.* 8*d.*; relief in kind, 1*s.* 10*d.*; making the equivalent of 3*s.* 6*d.* per day?—Yes.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

2844. Did the single man receive the four ozs. of tea per day?—Yes.

Mr. *Renshaw.*

2845. But he only got two days' work?—That is so.

Chairman.

2846. Did you take steps to discover whether these were genuinely distressed people?—The relieving officers made the usual enquiries, and they believed them to be genuine cases of distress.

2847. Did you take on any additional staff of officers for that purpose?—Yes, Sir; after the third day the yard was opened I made a report to the guardians.

Chairman—continued.

2848. Will you say how far you increased your staff?—At the present moment the staff has been increased by relieving officers, assistant relieving officers, labour superintendents, and clerks in the labour-yard to the extent of 87 officers.

Mr. *Bartley.*

2849. 87 relieving officers?—No, sir; not 87 relieving officers—relieving officers, assistant relieving officers, labour superintendents, and clerks in the labour yard.

Chairman.

2850. Can you give the number for each of those classes?—I am afraid I cannot.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

2851. It is 87 additional, anyhow, is it not?—Yes.

Chairman.

2852. 87 extra staff?—Yes.

2853. How many relieving officers?—Four relieving officers.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

2854. Four extra?—Four extra.

Chairman.

2855. How many assistants; do you know?—Up to a week ago there were four relieving officers and 20 assistant relieving officers; 36 ordinary labour superintendents, and one principal labour superintendent; five clerks, six carpenters (or handy men), and one porter. That staff, since a week or 10 days ago, has been further increased to 87.

2856. Then the salaries that you have paid have increased, of course, proportionately?—Yes; I think you may take the average at 100*l.* per week.

Mr. *Bartley.*

2857. The extra?—The extra staff.

Chairman.

2858. Now, what have you paid in relief up to date; can you give that, or up to any recent date?—Up to last night the guardians have relieved in the labour-yard 38,390 men at 3*s.* 6*d.* per day.

2859. Down to what date?—Last night, the 28th of February.

2860. We have had this before in another instance. That does not mean that 38,390 separate people have been relieved, does it?—Certainly not, Sir; a man may be relieved five days in the week, and, of course, he would count five times.

2861. You have had 38,390 days' work, and have given a corresponding relief?—That is so; that is to say, it is not 38,390 different men.

2862. No, quite so. What has been the cost of that?—That I can work out in one moment.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

2863. 3*s.* 6*d.* a day, is it not?—3*s.* 6*d.* a day. It is over 6,000*l.*

Chairman.

2864. Then you have provided material for the stone-breaking?—Yes.

2865. What sort of stone, granite?—Blue Guernsey granite.

2866. Can you give the highest number you relieved on any one day?—Yes, Sir; 1,759.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

2867. Is that on one of the first days?—No, that was on the 21st February. I can put in a statement of the number of men relieved each day from the 7th January, 1895, to the 28th February same year.

Chairman.

2868. Put in that, please?—(*The document is delivered in.*)

Mr. *Billson.*

2869. It does not show how many are relieved over and over again, does it?—No, Sir, it does not; that, of course, I am unable to give.

Chairman.

2870. Can you form any conjecture of how many men have been dealt with altogether, separate individuals?—I can give it you for one fortnight, and that was the highest fortnight; it was about 1,900.

2871. How many did you relieve in the two days when it was "first come first served"?—156 on the first day, 517 on the second day.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

2872. How many on the third?—The yard was closed on the third day, Sir.

Chairman.

2873. You were afraid that if it went on at that ratio you would be landed in an uncomfortable place?—Quite so; I took upon myself the responsibility of closing the yard and calling the guardians together.

2874. What have you expended in the purchase of materials, can you say?—No, I am afraid I cannot.

2875. There are certain papers that you are prepared to put in?—Yes.

2876. One showing the scale of relief and regulations for the yard?—Yes, Sir.

2877. Another showing the number of men employed in the yard up to date; that you have already promised, I think?—Yes.

2878. And a Return to the Local Government Board as to the distress in the Union?—Yes.

2879. You will also put in a statement showing the annual expenditure on out-door relief for some years?—Yes.

2880. Does that show a tendency to increase? Yes.

2881. Taking years some distance back, can you quote a few to show the Committee what it has been?—Going back to the year 1873, the total relief for that year, ending Lady Day, was 10,218*l.*; the next year it was 10,004*l.*; the next 9,213*l.*; the next 9,624*l.*; in 1877 it was 9,502*l.*; in 1878, 9,203*l.*; 1879, 7,928*l.*; 1880, 7,144*l.*; 1881, 6,572*l.*; 1882, 6,677*l.*; 1883, 6,149*l.*; and in 1884, 5,215*l.* I may remark, Sir, that that is the lowest amount of any year, 1884.

Chairman—continued.

2882. Can you give any reason (any conjectural reason even) why it fell to that low pitch in 1884, it having been nearly double in 1874?—The policy of the board from 1873 was to reduce out relief, and from 1884 the policy of the board has been to increase out-relief.

2883. Have you sufficient indoor accommodation?—No.

2884. You have not?—No; we have 150 in the two workhouses and infirmary over our certified number.

2885. Have the Local Government Board urged you to supply greater accommodation?—Yes, for some years past.

2886. But that has not been done?—No.

2887. Can you say why?—The last resolution of the guardians really tied their hands; they resolved that they would not consider the question of indoor accommodation until the Report of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor was issued.

Mr. *Renshaw.*

2888. Is it not a fact that one of your workhouses has been condemned?—Partly so.

Chairman.

2889. Was there the same pressure on the accommodation in 1884?—In my opinion, the indoor accommodation for the St. Olave's Union has been insufficient for at least 15 years.

2890. Now, will you follow on with 1885 and subsequent years?—In 1885, 5,660*l.*; 1886, 6,052*l.*; 1887, 7,790*l.*; 1888, 8,199*l.*; 1889, 9,296*l.*; 1890, 10,562*l.*; 1891, 11,372*l.*; 1892, 12,301*l.*; 1893, 12,421*l.*; and 1894, 12,733*l.*

2891. A constantly ascending scale?—Yes, Sir; and for the 46 weeks of the present year it is 13,100*l.* Of course, there are six further weeks to be accounted for.

2892. Is the population increasing in your union, or is it stationary?—It is practically stationary. The population, according to the census of 1881, was 134,586; at the census of 1891 it was 136,456.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

2893. Is that the whole union?—The whole union.

Chairman.

2894. Practically stationary?—Practically stationary.

2895. And can you give the figures as to the rateable value?—Yes. For the whole union the valuation coming into force on the 6th April, 1895, was 839,075*l.*

2896. And what is the poor rate?—In the parish of Bermondsey it is 3*s.* 10*d.* in the £.

Mr. *Jackson.*

2897. Is that for the relief of the poor only?—The poor rate only—not the total rate—the actual poor rate.

Chairman.

2898. How do you discriminate?—That is the poor rate as distinct from the general sewers and lighting rates. The total amount of rates in the

Parish

Chairman—continued.

Parish of Bermondsey and the Parish of Rotherhithe has averaged, during the past three years, 7*s.* in the 1*l.*; for the other three parishes of the union 6*s.*

2899. And what is the poor rate in the other parishes?—About 2*s.* for the half-year.

Mr. *Bartley.*

2900. Does that include any benefit you get from the equalisation rate?—Two of the parishes in the union benefit by that rate, and three do not; they have to contribute.

Chairman.

2901. Now, can you say of the outdoor poor, who reached last year 12,733 (and a larger figure this year) how many of those were adults and how many were children?—That was the actual expenditure, sir; not numbers.

2902. Oh! that is the expenditure; then what were the numbers?—I can put in a statement for the years ended Lady Day, 1892, 1893, 1894, and 1895, and also the expenditure for each week of the year.

2903. Well, will you say how many there were relieved outdoor?—Take the first week of Lady Day half-year, 1892: the number relieved was 2,353; for the same period of the next year, 1893, the number was 2,367; the first week of Lady Day half-year, 1894, was 2,611; the first week of Lady Day half-year, 1895, was 2,559; and the expenditure for that particular week of each of the half-years, 1892, 1893, 1894 and 1895, was 203*l.*, 213*l.*, 249*l.*, and 284*l.*

2904. What was the total number of persons in receipt of relief in the union by the last return, the first week of the present month, can you give the figures?—I think I have a statement here of the 1st of January and the 1st of July returns for some years, sir.

2905. Can you give the figures for the first week of the present month?—The total, sir?

2906. Yes?—In-door and out-door, including hospitals and schools, I cannot.

2907. Can you give the indoor and out-door?—Yes; the numbers out-door are 9,888 persons relieved, and the expenditure, 1,884*l.*

2908. And indoor?—The total number of persons in the two workhouses and the infirmary was 1,462.

2909. Can you say how many of the persons relieved outdoor were adults, and how many were children?—No, sir, I have not the details.

2910. Has there been any increase in the scale of payments, as well as in the numbers?—In both. The policy of the board is to give more liberal relief now than they have done in the past.

2911. That change of policy you speak of, as having occurred about 10 years ago, I think: Was that in consequence of any change in the constitution of the board?—Yes. Certain guardians were returned to the board pledged to give outdoor relief as against indoor relief.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

2912. When did that happen, in 1884?—Yes.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley*—continued.

2913. Was that intensified at the last election at all?—No, sir, I think not.

Chairman.

2914. Can you take one of the weeks in this year and compare it with the numbers relieved in the previous severe winters; are you able to do that?—I can go back to 1891, but no further.

2915. Will you go back to 1891: Take any one week towards the end of January and compare it with the previous week; 1890–91 was a severe winter, was it?—Yes; this is so far as the outdoor poor are concerned. In the first week of the year 1892 the number chargeable was 2,737; the next week the number was 2,914; the next week 2,980; the next 3,078; and the next 2,862. That will really give you the month of January in 1892.

2916. You cannot give 1891?—No, sir, I cannot.

2917. Those figures we can compare with those of the present year. Can you repeat the figures for the present year?—Yes. The first week, 2,629; the second week, 4,760 (that was the week in which the labour-yard was opened); the next week, 5,502; the next, 6,738; and the next, 7,982.

Mr. *Bartley.*

2918. And the next?—9,888.

Chairman.

2919. When the stone-yard was opened, was it generally known that it was to be opened?—No announcement was made of the fact by the guardians.

2920. But were the reports of the proceedings of the guardians publicly known, do you think?—Yes; the board-room is open to the Press.

2921. And you probably think that that contributed to bring people together so largely on those two days of which you have spoken?—Undoubtedly.

2922. Reports of the proceedings of the guardians appeared in all the daily and evening papers throughout London?—Yes, sir.

2923. Do the guardians think that the present investigation (conducted by that additional staff which you have referred to) into the genuineness of the cases applying for relief is sufficient?—I think so, as far, of course, as it is possible to inquire into it.

2924. Do you think that you still suffer from the attraction of people from other parts of the Metropolis?—We have done since last Monday week, because, on making my report to the board, on the 9th January, the guardians resolved that men who were residing in common lodging-houses should not be eligible for admission to the stone-yard. Unfortunately, the guardians have since rescinded that resolution.

2925. They have since rescinded that resolution?—Yes; so that now, last week and the present week, men are being admitted from lodging-houses.

2926. Who are, therefore, not genuine residents, or may not be?—May not be?

2927. Who may not be genuine residents in the union?—That is so. For instance, the six

Chairman—continued.

months' limit of course is unproved; but if a man says that he has been six months residing in the odging-house, you cannot prove to the contrary, and you must take his statement.

2928. Of course, we understand this: the guardians are bound to relieve a man who is really destitute, on applying to them, whether he lives in a lodging-house or not?—Certainly.

2929. But this is with regard to the men receiving this special relief on the ground of want of employment?—That is so; and, of course, special relief by way of the labour-yard.

2930. Have the Local Government Board made any observations upon your proceedings?—Yes, sir.

2931. Will you state the nature of those observations?—This letter is dated 8th January, 1895, from the Local Government Board, in reply to the guardians' letter of the 4th of the same month reporting the opening of the labour yard: "I am directed by the Local Government Board to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, in which you inform them that, under the circumstances mentioned, the guardians of the St. Olave's Union have decided to open the stone-yard for the purpose of employing therein able-bodied applicants for relief. I am directed to state that the Board assent to the opening of the stone-yard; but it will be necessary that the task of work to be performed by the applicants for relief should be formally approved by the Board. A form in which such task may conveniently be submitted to the Board is enclosed herewith. The Board should be informed at the same time of the arrangements which have been made for the superintendence of the men when at work. I am directed to add, with regard to the amount of relief proposed to be paid to each man, that the circumstances of each case should be considered separately, and relief should be given in accordance with the necessities of each applicant and of those dependent on him, and not as a fixed payment per day for work performed." That latter clause arose out of the fact that the guardians resolved, in the first instance, to open the labour-yard and allow the men to go in six days per week without any limit whatever. Irrespective of whether a man was a single man, or whether he was a married man with five or more children dependent upon him, he was to be allowed to go into the labour-yard six days per week.

2932. Was any action taken upon the receipt of that letter?—Yes; the number of days was limited according to the scale I have read.

2933. You have stated the task of work imposed as a test upon those who were relieved; was that task fully performed?—No.

2934. Were there officers there to see that it was performed?—Yes; but a considerable number of the men who go into the labour-yard are incapable of performing the task.

2935. Has there been any difference in this respect during the course of the last few weeks?—No, sir; it is the same.

2936. Still the same state of things continues?—Certainly.

2937. So that sometimes a very small amount of work may be done?—That is so.

2938. Then is the test of any value?—Practically not.

Mr. *Bartley.*

2939. Do you mean that they are only incapable, or that some are unwilling?—Some are incapable, and I should say that at least one-third are unwilling.

Chairman.

2940. And those who are unwilling would, of course, have their unwillingness increased if they found that it was unnecessary to do the task?—Certainly.

2941. Can you give any information as to the cost of the stones broken under those circumstances. The guardians have not regarded it as a commercial transaction, I suppose?—Certainly not, sir; it is certainly a losing one.

2942. Viewed in that light, it would not be lucrative?—No.

Mr. *John Burns.*

2943. What do you pay a ton?—By contract, 8*s.* 9*d.*; but some of the granite had to be bought out of contract; and 12*s.* 6*d.* per ton was paid for some and 14*s.* per ton for another part.

2944. That is for the unbroken granite?—Yes, the granite spalls, as the stone comes from Guernsey.

2945. The normal price is 8*s.* 3*d.*, is it not?—About that.

2946. And it has risen in some parishes, has it not, to 15*s.* 6*d.*?—Yes. Under the contract which was running from Lady Day, 1894, to Lady Day, 1895, the price was 8*s.* 9*d.*, but the contractor, in consequence of the severe gales prevalent at the time, was unable to deliver, and we had to get it elsewhere in order to find the men work.

2947. It nearly doubled in cost?—Yes.

Chairman.

2948. You have told me that the staff has been increased: can you tell me, or put in a paper showing by what appointments and on what days it has been gradually increased to the present number? You may not be able to tell me that straight off?—I might give a general answer. At every board meeting (the board meets fortnightly, on the Thursday), since the yard was opened, additions have been made each fortnight to the staff.

2949. Then I gather that in your opinion the organization that you have for the purpose of investigating the cases at the homes of the persons relieved, and so forth, is sufficient?—Certainly.

2950. But as to the supervision of the work, you do not consider that effective, taking into account the class of men that are in the yard?—The supervision would have to be trebled to get "the task" out of the men.

2951. Are there any charitable organizations in the union?—Very few.

2952. Is there any reason to suppose that those who have been relieved by the guardians have also been receiving aid from charitable sources?—Not that I am aware of.

2953. This is the only step that the guardians have taken with a view to meeting the present emergency?—No, sir, not quite. They have taken further steps. On the 31st January the guardians resolved that three or four men be engaged

Chairman—continued.

gaged for one month to repair and relay certain floors at one of the workhouses, where necessary, at the usual rate of wages. On the 17th January, 1895, the guardians resolved: "That six men be engaged to repair the macadam roadway; 12 men to clean the windows, and six men to repair fences, &c., where necessary, at the infirmary; at wages after the rate of 6*d.* per hour; the men to be selected by the steward on the recommendation of the relieving officers after due inquiry, and to be men who have not worked in the labour-yard."

Mr. *Bartley.*

2954. Did they work properly?—Yes.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

2955. We have been told of certain abuses which took place in this labour-yard—men getting out of the yard during the day and coming back at the end of the day to claim their pay, just as if they had been working all day; are those stories true?—Only in a few isolated instances; and when the men were found out they were turned out of the yard and their pay stopped.

2956. Did ever that happen at an early part of the proceedings?—Yes.

2957. Can you tell us about which day it was that you had that maximum number of 1,759 men in the yard?—On the 21st February.

2958. About six weeks after you started the works, then?—Yes; the works were started on the 7th January.

2959. Was that number all in the yard at one time?—The whole day, from 10 to 5.

Mr. *Jackson.*

2960. What is the ordinary price paid for breaking stones of this kind per ton?—I could not say.

2961. You have never had any of it done by contract?—No.

2962. Have you any knowledge at all what it cost per ton?—No, that has not been worked out. Of course, the accounts for the plant and other things that were necessary have not been all received yet, and consequently it is impossible to work it out.

2963. Will it be worked out at the end of the time?—Yes, sir.

2964. You gave us a figure of the rateable value. I think you only gave us one figure. Has the rateable value shown any increase?—No.

2965. It remains about stationary?—Yes, about stationary.

Mr. *Bartley.*

2966. Do you think the residence test can really be applied in this matter?—In all cases, except lodging-house cases.

2967. You think it can?—Yes.

2968. Even to the large numbers in the stone-yard?—Yes.

2969. You have stated, as I understand, that the numbers taking out-door relief have doubled since 1884—is that so?—The amount of relief given.

2970. Have not the numbers increased?—Not to any great extent.

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

2971. I thought the figures you gave showed a large increase?—That was the actual expenditure on out-relief, not numbers; I have not the numbers here.

2972. Are the numbers practically the same?—Practically the same.

2973. Then the additional cost is simply the amount of the extra money given?—Yes.

2974. Do you think that giving a larger amount does not tend to increase the number of recipients?—To some extent it has done so, but not to a large extent.

2975. Why did the guardians fix the rate of 3*s.* 6*d.* a day, do you know?—It was based on work at 6*d.* per hour.

2976. Would you have had the same number of people applying, do you think, if you had offered a smaller wage?—Undoubtedly not, in my opinion.

2977. Do you consider that the great number of applicants was due to the large payment you offered?—Yes.

2978. Do you think it was unduly large to give?—I do.

2979. Do you think it inflicted injury, or that it was a benefit to the people, the giving of it or not?—Not in all cases a benefit; undoubtedly it was abused.

2980. You think it was abused?—Yes.

2981. Do you think it is a system that should be extended all over London?—No, I should certainly not advise it.

2982. You think it would be very mischievous?—Very.

2983. Then you would strongly urge, I take it, that if this sort of work is to be given it should be given at a rate considerably under that paid for the ordinary day's work?—Yes, undoubtedly.

2984. You mean so as to induce people to leave it as soon as they can?—Yes.

2985. You think that would be more beneficial to the poor themselves?—Much more.

Mr. *David Randell.*

2986. In your experience, have boards of guardians now adequate means and machinery for affording relief in cases of sudden and extraordinary distress?—I think so.

2987. I do not know whether you heard Mr. Hill's evidence at all. Do you advocate State intervention in any way by way of assisting local relief?—No, I think the local authorities have ample means and machinery to deal with the distress which exists.

2988. You do not advocate State aid in any way whatever?—No, I think the local authorities can better deal with it than the State.

Chairman.

2989. You think they have both the means and powers enough, at the present moment, to deal with it?—Yes.

Mr. *David Randell.*

2990. Even in cases of emergency?—Yes.

Mr. *Benn.*

2991. You remember the clause in the Local Government Board letter strongly recommending

Mr. *Benn*—continued.

ing that the guardians should co-operate with the local authority?—Yes.

2992. Was any attempt made on the part of your guardians to co-operate with the local authority of your district?—Yes, they went to the Vestry of Bermondsey and to the Vestry of Rotherhithe as a deputation, and asked both vestries to give out work of stone-breaking in their vestry yards in order that these men should not become pauperised.

2993. They suggested stone-breaking?—Yes.

2994. That was the only co-operation?—Or any other labour that the vestry required done.

2995. Was the suggestion made that the guardians should recommend certain cases to the vestry?—Yes.

2996. I do not wish to ask the opinions of the gentlemen on the two bodies at all, but is the policy of the guardians similar to that which obtains on the vestry, or are the bodies antagonistic rather?—Certainly not.

2997. Not antagonistic?—Oh! no.

2998. With respect to the question of the honourable Member for North Islington, you stated just now that you would recommend a lower payment in the way of wages than that which obtains in the market. Do not you think that the difficulty would be better met by reducing hours rather than wages? Supposing you only gave the men two or three days' work a week and paid 6*d.* an hour, would not you achieve the same thing?—No, sir, I think not.

2999. Why not? Do not you think that a man, only obtaining in that way half a week's work, would be induced to look for other work?—He might be.

3000. Do not you think he would be more induced to look for work then than he would be if he was receiving, perhaps, 4½*d.* an hour for the whole of the week?—Of course, it would entirely depend upon the necessities of the case, on the man's requirements.

3001. That is what I am putting to you. The question is simply this: whether the reduction of hours does not amount to the same thing, as an incentive to the man, as a reduction of wages?—No; I should think a reduction of wages would act better, both in the interests of the guardians and in the interest of the man.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

3002. Have the vestries of Bermondsey and Rotherhithe provided any work for the unemployed this winter?—I think there is a standing order of the Bermondsey Vestry that five and twenty men per week additional to their permanent staff should be engaged for several months of the winter.

3003. Is that as regards Bermondsey?—Yes.

3004. Do you know anything with regard to Rotherhithe?—They have one or two special building works in hand at the present time, and they have put men on, doing the work themselves.

3005. Would you be able to form an opinion as to whether there is work in Bermondsey and Rotherhithe which might be done?—I could not say.

3006. I think you told us that the average rate, the total rate, I mean, for the last few years in Bermondsey and Rotherhithe was 7*s.*?—7*s.* in the £.

Mr. *Pickersgill*—continued.

3007. There is one other matter I want to ask you about. Sir Hugh Owen, when he was before us, stated that in your report to the Local Government Board it was said that condemned houses may, to some extent, have caused the distress in your district. Can you explain that statement?—The Tower Bridge, of course, is in the union, the southern approach, and a considerable amount of property has been demolished to form the approach on the southern side.

3008. To follow that out, how does that cause distress? Perhaps it would be just as well to trace it to see how that affects the distress. I can understand its causing a greater crowding, but does it cause want of employment?—I think it does at the same time, because if you remove a manufactory, necessarily the men are thrown out of work.

3009. Remove a manufactory?—Or business premises of any kind.

Mr. *John Burns.*

3010. You have handed in a statement in which it is declared that in ten years the money spent on outdoor relief increased from 5,000*l.*, roughly, to 12,000*l.*?—Yes, sir.

3011. You said also, on those figures being mentioned, that the number of recipients had not proportionately increased as the money had done—is that right?—That is so.

3012. Then am I understand that the difference between the 5,000*l.* and the 12,000*l.* represents a difference in the generosity of the treatment of the sick and the aged who receive outdoor relief?—The out-relief is not wholly confined to the sick and aged.

3013. No. Has a disproportionate amount of the increase from 5,000*l.* to 12,000*l.* been spent in giving a larger sum to the aged and the sick?—Not the sick, because the sick are largely treated indoor; you may put it to the aged.

3014. Outdoor, in the shape of medical relief to the outdoor?—No.

3015. Then, to whom has it been given?—To a large extent, to able-bodied widows.

3016. Able-bodied widows?—Yes.

3017. And children?—Yes, and children.

3018. Then we cannot construe the increase from 5,000*l.* to 12,000*l.* as being due to an increase in the able-bodied male applicants?—Not to any great extent.

3019. Not to an appreciable extent?—No.

3020. Is it connected with the unemployed problem in any way?—I think not.

3021. Did I gather correctly that you paid for your spalls 8*s.* 9*d.* per ton under contract?—Yes.

3022. But that immediately pressure was put upon the contractor the price jumped from 8*s.* 9*d.* up through 12*s.* to 14*s.*?—The granite supplied at 12*s.* and the granite supplied at 14*s.* was supplied by two firms other than the contractor.

3023. Did not the contractor who supplied you at 8*s.* 9*d.* consent to supply you for 10*s.* or 12*s.*?—His statement was that he could not obtain stone at all; he could not get it from Guernsey.

3024. So you were compelled to go to outside contractors?—Yes.

3025. Are

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

3025. Are you the only body which has been similarly placed?—I could not say.

3026. What was the total cost per ton, taking into account the amount paid for the unbroken stone and the amount received for the stone when broken and sold?—That return has not yet been worked out.

3027. Would you kindly send it in to the Committee?—Yes, sir.

3028. Now, you spoke about the great number of men in the stone-yard who were weaklings and who could not work. I suppose from those it would be unkind to expect a very large amount of work?—Certainly.

3029. And for those men you would demand a sympathetic and exceptional consideration?—Certainly.

3030. Now, am I to gather from you that one third of the total men in the stone-yard on a given day were strong men, physically—men physically capable of doing work, yet that they, for some reason unknown to you, would not do that work?—Yes.

3031. Now, is that one-third the general proportion that which prevails of stone-yard delinquents?—That I could not say.

3032. Does it happen every year?—So far as this year is concerned, in the case of the guardians of St. Olave's, I think that is the proportion.

3033. Is the proportion of men who refuse to do a decent amount of work greater this year than last year?—The guardians had no stone-yard open last year.

3034. But when last they had it open: Is it greater now than then?—I was not clerk to the Board eight years ago.

3035. Would you inquire, and let us know that?—I can give you this information, sir, that the guardians at that time, in consequence of the unruly conduct of the men, and their unwillingness to work, suddenly closed the stone-yard.

3036. Two years ago?—Eight years ago.

3037. Eight years ago. Now, who is the superintendent of the stone-yard just now; is he a workhouse official, or is he a man appointed by the surveyor?—He is a man appointed by the guardians temporarily.

3038. It is exceedingly important that we should know the personnel of the staff; is he a workhouse official?—No, sir, he is not.

3039. What was he before he had this particular job?—He had been in the Army.

3040. In the Army?—Yes.

3041. What had been his work since he left the Army, do you know?—No, I do not; he has not retired from the Army a great time.

3042. Then his disciplinary powers could not be very great, as one-third of the men were not doing their proper share of work?—It would be a very difficult thing to make that one-third do their work.

3043. I put this to you: Is it your experience as a Poor-law clerk that all the work of a manual character which is carried out by a Poor-law authority—such as breaking stones, picking oakum, chopping wood, and mending roads—is always less per man in the aggregate than when done by the surveyor or the local authority?—So far as the first three are concerned, I can say, certainly, "Yes"; I have no knowledge of the latter, the road-making.

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

3044. Now, would you favour the transfer of the stone-yard work and the breaking of stones (for exceptional distress, I mean) from the Poor-law authority and the workhouse officials to the surveyor?—Yes.

3045. To be done under current conditions by them?—Certainly.

3046. Do you often visit the stone-yard?—Yes; frequently.

3047. What is your experience of the effect of the stone-yard on a man who has never been there before?—Demoralising.

3048. Demoralising; now, in what sense?—In every sense.

3049. The associations are bad?—Yes.

3050. There is a premium placed upon loafing, you think?—Yes.

3051. And if a man is willing to do a good share of work the worst man in the yard drags the better man down to his level; is not that so?—Certainly; he would not allow him to do it.

3052. Let me put this case to you: Suppose there was a navvy temporarily out of work—a good strong chap, and he was to go to the stone-yard with an intention, not only of breaking the 8-cwt., but was capable of breaking, and did break, 15 cwt. or 16 cwt. on the first day; would not, in your experience, pressure be brought to bear upon him to drag him down from the 12 cwt., or 14 cwt., or 15 cwt., or 16 cwt., to 8 cwt., or 9 cwt., and then gradually down to six and five?—Pressure would be brought to bear upon him.

3053. And, generally speaking, it is so brought to bear, is it not?—Yes.

3054. In your experience and opinion, is that demoralising effect brought about mainly because pauperising associations are connected with stone yard work?—No, I do not think so.

3055. Do you think the surveyor, if he broke the same stones with the same type of man that goes to the stone-yard under the Poor-law, would countenance and stand that kind of thing?—He would not, of course.

3056. It would not exist?—No.

3057. Then you think the difference between having the stone broken in the stoneyard and in the vestry depôt is the difference between work honestly done and full value given, and work nominally and perfunctorily done under the Poor-law?—Yes, I do.

3058. By the same men?—Yes.

Mr. *Bartley.*

3059. Do I understand you to say done by the same gang of men?—By the same gang of men.

Mr. *John Burns.*

3060. I will put this to you: Given Tom, Dick, and Harry in the stone-yard, the average output would probably be, for four days, 8 cwt. or 9 cwt.; in the vestry depôt it would probably be nearly double that amount?—Yes.

3061. To what do you attribute the difference in the amount of work?—To the moral conditions under which the work is executed. In the

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

one case the man is working for wages, and he is compelled to do his work, otherwise he is discharged; in the other case he knows he is getting relief, and he wishes to do as little as he possibly can for it.

3062. Now we will come to the other point: You said that in your opinion local authorities were now capable of grappling with normal distress, and even exceptional distress?—Yes.

3063. Do you adhere to that?—Yes.

3064. If you had a thousand men out of work in St. Olave's, men who had never been to the stone-yard or applied for relief, do you think that, as apart from the frost, the surveyor of your vestry, in conjunction with the guardians, could provide work for these men to do?—Not provide permanent work for them.

3065. But could you provide sufficient to tide them over the slack period, either giving two or three days per week or six days a week with shorter hours?—Do you mean, sir, relief by way of the stone-yard?

3066. No; relief by way of sanitary work—sweeping, emptying dust bins, painting up, and generally putting the parish in order?—I cannot say anything about the sanitary work of the parish at all.

3067. Then what did you mean when you said that the local authorities were capable of grappling with exceptional distress?—I think they have powers enough to grapple with it.

3068. You mean through the Poor Law?—Yes.

3069. And where, not through the Poor Law, by occasional work provided by the sanitary authority?—Certainly.

3070. Have you formed any opinion as to the disadvantage of disfranchising men by outdoor relief in case of exceptional distress?—No.

3071. Do you think that if disfranchisement were removed for receiving relief at exceptional distress times, good would be done?—I certainly should not advise the alteration of the law in that respect.

3072. You would not?—No.

3073. Why?—Because I think you must have a deterrent.

3074. You think that disfranchisement is a deterrent?—To some extent.

Mr. *Benn.*

3075. May I ask on that: What do you think will be the reduction of the register owing to the recent distress relief distributed in your district?—I have not gone into that question.

3076. But that case will come forward on the registration, will it not?—Certainly, next July.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

3077. You said that a deputation informed the guardians, or rather that a deputation waited on the guardians with Mr. Wilkes as their spokesman, and said that 2,000 persons were unemployed in Bermondsey at that time; that was in January, I think?—The 3rd January.

3078. Have you any belief of your own as to the truth of that statement?—I could not say.

3079. You have no opinion?—No opinion. May I say that in addition to the documents I have handed in I can also put in a "Return of callings and occupations of men in the Labour-Yard" for "two weeks ended 20th February, 1895."

Chairman.

3080. Put in any return of that kind that you think will throw light upon the subject, even though you may have been asked questions with regard to it; then we shall get it in tabular form?—I will put them all in.—[*The documents were delivered in.*

Monday, 4*th March* 1895.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Acland.
Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. Billson.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. Bousfield.
Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. Round.
Mr. John Wilson (Durham).
Mr. John Wilson (Govan).
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. JOHN WILLIAMS BENN, a Member of the Committee; Examined.

Chairman.

3081. YOU have as a London Member taken a great interest in this question, and I believe you have formed some definite opinions as to what might be, or ought to be, done; would you be good enough to state to the Committee what your views are?—With regard to London, my suggestion, and it cannot be considered more than a suggestion, may be summed up in a sentence. It is a suggestion to give practical effect to certain clauses in the Local Government Board Circular, which has been issued at various intervals since 1886. I may just remind the Committee of one or two recommendations in that Circular, and then proceed to show how, in the opinion of some of the London Members, more effect may be given to those valuable recommendations. As the Committee will remember, in the Circular which the Local Government Board sent to the guardians and local authorities of London they say: "The Local Government Board are convinced that in the ranks of those who do not ordinarily seek parish relief there is evidence of much and increased privation, and if the depression in trade continues, it is to be feared that large numbers of persons usually in regular employment will be reduced to the greatest straits."

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

3082. What is the date of the Circular which you are reading?—I am reading from the 1892 Circular, but I think there is not much variation between the different Circulars. The Circular of 1892 is printed at page 185 of the Blue Book on "Agencies and Methods for dealing with the Unemployed." This is the paragraph to which I wish to call particular attention: "The spirit of independence which leads so many of the working classes to make great personal sacrifices rather than incur the stigma of pauperism is one which deserves the greatest sympathy and respect, and which it is the duty and interest of the community to maintain by all the means at its disposal." I will not read the whole of the Circular, as honourable Members have it before them. It goes on, in a later paragraph, to say: "It is not desirable that the working classes should be familiarised with Poor-law relief, and if once the honourable sentiment which now leads them to avoid it is broken down, it is probable that recourse will be had to this provision on the slightest occasion." Then, on page 186, it says: "What is required in the endeavour to relieve artizans and others who have hitherto avoided Poor-law assistance, and who are temporarily deprived of employment, is; and then the Circular sets out certain work which local authorities might undertake in order to relieve the class of persons to which the Circular refers. There are other points in the Circular which are worthy of notice, but as the Circular is before the Committee I will not trouble to read any more of it. Now I start with this Circular, and ask that the Committee shall accept this view of the position, and attempt to give practical effect to its recommendations; and first of all I submit to the Committee this statement: that so far as this Circular is concerned it ended with itself in many parishes of London. The local authorities to which this document had particular reference were quite unable to give practical effect to its recommendations, much as many of them desired to carry out such works as are mentioned in it. Indeed, the position in London is this: That in the districts where the unemployed congregate, where such works are most necessary the rates are highest, and the machinery the least effective for carrying out such work.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

3083. Would you name the districts that you refer to?—I propose to come to the districts at a later stage; but, I may say in answer to your question, those districts which realize benefit under

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

under the Equalisation of Rates Act. Now, in order to show first how certain districts of London are getting poorer, while others seem to be getting richer, I will put in some figures with regard to the district of London with which I am particularly associated. If the Returns of pauperism are to be taken as any indication of the increase of poverty and of the increase of the unemployed, those figures are certainly very significant. I have taken out from the official Return, headed "Pauperism, England and Wales. Return B," the number of paupers relieved on the 1st of January and on the 1st of July. I have taken, as a typical case, the five unions constituting the Tower Hamlets, viz., Mile End Old Town, St. George's East, Limehouse, Poplar, and Whitechapel. Taking the winter figures first (and it is to be noted that these winter figures are taken on the 1st of January, so that they are not affected by the recent frost, but may be called normal figures) in regard to the indoor paupers, I find, first of all, there were in the five unions named, in 1890, 525 male paupers, and at the same date in 1894 there were 1,106. The females in 1890 were 380, and in 1894, 687; the children in 1890 were 560, and in 1894, 372; which shows a decrease. The total, therefore, of the indoor paupers in 1890 was 1,465, and in 1894 it was 2,165. Then, with regard to outdoor paupers (and I may say that outdoor relief in some parts of the district is generally refused) in 1890 the number of male outdoor paupers was 135, and in 1894 it was 216; the number of females was 316 in 1890, and 620 in 1894; the number of children was 798 in 1890, and 1,133 in 1894, making the total of outdoor paupers in 1890, 1,249, and in 1894, 2,015. I do not know whether I need trouble the Committee by reading the summer figures, but I may say that they tally almost exactly; that as regards the adult section, at all events, these figures show that in these five unions pauperism has doubled within these four years, as shown in these Returns.

Chairman.

3084. The figures you give us do not amount to a doubling?—I think, if you will take the males, taking the heads of families, you will find it is so in each case. Of course, it is very necessary to take the population by the side of such figures, and so I will ask the Committee to carefully observe the figures as to population. Taking the five unions altogether (there is no object in separating them, but I can give the separate figures if the Committee desire it) the population in 1891 was 451,063, and the population in 1894 was 453,243.

Mr. *Acland.*

3085. Are those the figures of the Registrar General's Returns?—Yes. That shows that the population of these unions during the three years only increased to the extent of about 2,000. Comparing that with one of the parishes of the West, and I may say I have not selected this parish because it is more favourable to my view, for other parishes show similar returns, taking

Mr. *Acland*—continued.

St. George's, Hanover Square, Union, and comparing it with the union of the Tower Hamlets, we find taking similar figures a decrease. If it is desired I will give the figures to the Committee.

Chairman.

3086. You are going to put in that paper, I understand?—Yes, I will put in the paper; I do not know whether I am burdening the Committee with too much detail.

3087. If the paper is to be put in, perhaps it will be enough if you give us the totals?—Taking St. George's, Hanover Square, Union, comprising St. George's, Hanover Square, and St. Margaret's and St. John's, the winter figures in 1890 show the total number of indoor paupers as 698, men, women, and children; and for 1894 the total is 767. That, therefore, is an increase as regards the total; but as regards the adults there is a decrease. The children in that case account for the extra figure.

Mr. *Bartley.*

3088. But there is an increase in that case?—Yes.

3089. As in the other case?—As in the other case. With regard to the outdoor paupers there is a decrease; taking the total of outdoor relief (which is rather the best index, perhaps, of this trouble) the figures for 1890 are 219; and for 1894, 168. Dividing up that total for outdoor relief, taking the heads of families, we find 60 males in 1890 as against 31 in 1894; and 62 females in 1890, as against 44 in 1894. Passing to the next point, having tried to show that some of the poorer districts of London, according to these figures, are getting poorer very rapidly, I desire to draw the attention of the Committee to a very important question, the question of the money which these districts have to meet their difficulties; and I desire broadly to state that, notwithstanding all that has been done recently owing to the Equalisation of Rates Act, the poorer parishes are still in the unfortunate position of having much heavier burdens than the richer parishes. Prior to equalisation, the rating in the Metropolis ranged from 4*s.* 1*d.*, beginning at St. James's, Westminster, up to 7*s.* 11*d.* in the extreme East of London, Bow. The relief afforded by the Equalisation of Rates Bill may, perhaps, be best understood if I take those two districts and give the figures, as amended, after equalisation; the figure for Bow in the Return for 1895 is 7*s.* 4*d.*·98.

Chairman.

3090. What does that rate include?—That is the total rate, local and central. Then taking the other district, St. James's, Westminster, the rate has jumped from 4*s.* 1*d.* to 4*s.* 5*d.*·41, or 4*s.* 5½*d.* practically.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

3091. Is that still the lowest in the Metropolis?—Yes, that is still the lowest. That, I think, will give the Committee sufficient information as to how equalisation has affected the rating of London.

Mr. *Bousfield.*

3092. Is the rate for Bow still the highest in London?—Yes. If there is any district upon which any member of the Committee would like to ask a question I can give the particular figures; but I think those I have mentioned fairly represent the case as to rating.

Chairman.

3093. According to the figures that you have given, Bow has gained 6*d.*, and St. James's, Westminster, has lost 4½*d.*?—Yes.

Mr. *Bartley.*

3094. Perhaps we might have the figures for St. Olave's, because it has been referred to so much in evidence, and one witness said that in some parts of St. Olave's the rates had been increased by the Equalisation of Rates Bill?—That is one of the cases in which some small parishes are mixed up, and some benefit and some lose. I am afraid I can only give the total figures in that case. Prior to equalisation, the rate in St. Olave's was 5*s.* 10*d.*—there are three parishes, Horsleydown, St. Olave's, Southwark, and St. Thomas's, Southwark: and since the equalisation the three together average about 6*s.* 4*d.*

3095. Then St. Olave's has gone up 6*d.*?—It has gone up.

3096. Although it is one of the poorest districts in London, according to the evidence we have had?—Of course, one would have to consider the rateable value—that is a very important question. If you take the rateable value per head of the population in the wealthier parishes, and the rateable value per head of the population in the poorer parishes, the figures I have given become even more significant.

3097. Still, the fact remains that this equalisation has made what we have heard described as one of the poorest parishes pay 6*d.* in the £ more than it did before?—I have not quoted St. Olave's as one of the poorest parishes.

3098. We have had it spoken of in evidence here as being one of the poorest parishes?—I do not know that the startling figures that have been placed before the Committee as to the methods of giving relief in St. Olave's were any indication that the St. Olave's district was poorer than the East-end. My contention has been that the amount given in relief is not to be taken as any indication in that sense.

3099. Would you not call St. Olave's a poor parish?—If you take the rateable value per head of the population it is not badly off. As the honourable Member is aware, under the Equalisation of Rates Bill, the rate was collected on the rateable value and redistributed on the population.

3100. May I ask for the figures for Islington?—Islington has done very well. Before the equalisation the rate in Islington was 5*s.* 2½*d.*

3101. Would you call Islington a poor parish?—I should think it is between the two. It is not a poor parish; it is an extremely well-managed parish.

3102. Yet the rates were extremely low?—I do not think the rates were high. It was very efficiently managed, no doubt.

3103. What did they have to pay after equalisation?—Before the equalisation it was 5*s.* 2½*d.*, and on equalisation they had to pay 4*s.* 11*d.*

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

3104. That is to say, it was saved 3½*d.*, although it is not a poor parish?—Those are the figures; you must draw your own conclusions. It is very densely populated, and the money was distributed according to population.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

3105. Would you say what amount St. Olave's received under the equalisation?—St. Olave's had to pay more than before. I do not know whether it would be more convenient for me to conclude my statement before submitting myself to cross-examination. I am quite in the hands of the Committee.

Chairman.

3106. I think it would be better if you would complete your statement. You quoted certain instances of the effect of the equalisation of rates?—Yes. To return to my original point, I think I can show that many of the parishes to whom this Circular was addressed would be very glad to give effect to its recommendations but for this condition of the rating; and the proposal which I have to submit to the Committee is that so far as London is concerned the keen edge of the unemployed difficulty might be met if the Common Poor Fund, which is extremely useful in assisting London to cope with the pauperism section, were so extended that local authorities which had works suited for the unemployed could put those works in hand and obtain all the money, or at all events part of the money, through the guardians from the Common Poor Fund. I do not think that a very large addition to the Common Poor Fund would be necessary, and I submit that such a proposal would not break down the Poor-law to any serious extent. It would certainly lead to that co-operation between the guardians and local authorities which is recommended in this historical Circular. It would, moreover, do this: it would cause to be done on well-organized lines with proper officers that work which has only been muddled to a great extent by the local authorities up to the present time. The attitude of the local authorities towards this Circular has been one rather of irritation. They have received the Circular, and they have many of them immediately set about to discover some means to evade it; in some cases, indeed, they have had the courage to write to the Local Government Board, and say that the Circular was practically ridiculous, that it was a mockery, they had not the officers' funds to carry out its recommendations, they had not and could not touch it. In other cases, in order to make a show of complying, they have instructed their officers to do the best they could by putting on a few road-sweepers, or undertaking some temporary work of that kind. And it will be quite understood by the Committee that these officers having their hands already pretty full with the general work of the parish, and having no prospect of any additional emolument for dealing with this troublesome class, have not encouraged any extension of this attempt to deal with

Chairman—continued.

the unemployed; indeed, I think I may say in most cases those officers (and I can quite understand their attitude) have endeavoured to squelch any attempt at extension in that direction. And thus we have in this valuable Report on the "Unemployed" many discouraging observations which have come from the local surveyors and local officers. But I believe that if the guardians were empowered to allow to a local authority, which could show distinctly to the satisfaction of either the guardians or the Local Government Board that exceptional distress existed in their district, so much per head per day for a limited period to such of the worthy unemployed who are out of work through no fault of their own who were certified to be resident in the parish, and certified by the relieving officers, or some special officer, to be worthy of assistance in such a way as would correspond with the paragraph of the Circular of the Local Government Board, which I read, I believe if that could be done, many of the local authorities would be extremely glad to cope with the difficulty up to a certain point. This, of course, is not suggested as any remedy for the problem of the "unemployed"; but it is based upon this principle, that London is able, if properly organised, to look after this question so far as London is concerned, and so far as Londoners are concerned. It does not include any suggestion that there should be a grant from the State; it is based upon the principle that the wealth of London should enable the poorer districts to cope to a certain extent with such pressure as we are at the present time considering. I should be glad of an opportunity, perhaps under cross-examination, to show that in cases where a district cannot readily provide work or works which would be useful for the benefit of the district it would be possible for some districts to go outside their area in order to provide something in the shape of test work in such cases. I happen to be intimately associated with the Abbey Mills scheme from the start to the finish, and I think that out of that scheme the Committee might get some valuable suggestions as showing how a local authority instead of the Mansion House Committee could undertake such a scheme, provided they had not in their immediate district such work as would be suitable for this purpose.

3107. Your proposal is an extension of the application of the Common Poor Fund?—Just so.

3108. Would you tell the Committee exactly how the Common Poor Fund works at present?—Certainly.

3109. Perhaps you could give us something of its history?—I can tell you exactly what the position is. The Common Poor Fund is fed by a rate levied evenly on the rateable value fixed annually at the amount required for the statutory distribution of the whole, or a stated portion of the cost of certain kinds of service deemed to be a common concern. The two transactions of levy and repayment are not treated as distinct operations, but the balance between the two is struck, and the guardians are called upon to pay, or are paid, moneys according to the amount by which the amounts levied from them exceeds

Chairman—continued.

the amount paid to them, or *vice versâ*. The services falling upon the Common Poor Fund have been defined and extended by a series of Acts almost annual, from 30 & 31 Vict. chap. 6, to 42 & 43 Vict. chap. 54.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

3110. May I ask whether you are reading from some published Memorandum about the Common Poor Fund?—No, I was just reading a statement which I have made from some information of my own, but if the honourable Member desires to see a complete history of the Common Poor Fund, it is to be found in the Annual Report of the Local Government Board for 1893-1894, which is before the Committee at page 430. The heads of the Service thrown upon the Common Poor Fund (and it is important to notice how this Common Poor Fund has been extended as necessity has arisen) are: Maintenance of Pauper Children (whole cost); Education of Outdoor Pauper Children (whole cost); Expenses of Ambulances (whole cost); Expenses under Houseless Poor Acts (whole cost); Maintenance of Indoor Paupers, 5*d.* a day per head. (Honourable Members will recollect there is a collection all over the area, and then a redistribution); Maintenance of Lunatics and Insane Poor (part cost); Medicine and Medical and Surgical Appliances (part cost); Salaries of Officers (whole salaries of certain Officers); Rations of Officers (according to scale); Compensation for loss of Office; Registration of Fees (part cost); and Vaccination Fees and Expenses (part cost). If I may now pass to the question of work outside the area, my contention is rather that in most cases the parishes with such assistance would be able to provide sufficient work in the way of street cleaning and general parish work to meet the exigencies of the unemployed question when it is acute; and I may say I also strongly favour the suggestions which has been thrown out once or twice by the honourable Member for Battersea, with regard to placing the stone-yard under the local authority, so that if frost prevented work on the roads it might be under the surveyor rather than under the Poor-law authorities; but his experience upon that question would be greater than mine. Then, taking any scheme that might be arranged outside the area of the parish, I may inform the Committee that in and around London a great deal of work could be found in connection with the land. The figures which I have here are the outcome of an effort which the County of London has made to apply the Small Holdings Act. As we were, curiously enough, included, as honourable Members will remember, by the Act of 1888 as a rural county, this Act came within the scope of our operations, and we set to work to see if anything could be done to secure certain waste lands within the County of London, and to treat them as small holdings. We found that something could be done in that direction, and the figures which I am about to give are obtained from those sources. I may draw attention to the very interesting work which has been carried on by Mr. McDougall in the Isle of Dogs; some acres there, which for many years were a sort of no-man's land, were rented

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

rented by him at a nominal rent, and certain of the poor men of the district were put upon this land, and the result has been most satisfactory; the profit which they have made from the reception of street sweepings has been really very remarkable. The Committee are no doubt aware that it is very difficult to get rid of the street sweepings of London. These sweepings have been put upon this land; the men have dug in the sweepings, and the place has become quite a charming piece of market gardening, and the men have reaped a considerable profit over and above the rent—indeed, there is quite a competition to secure a bit of this land in the Isle of Dogs. With regard to other land of a like nature which might be utilised in various ways by local authorities who could not find work in their districts, I may mention that in Plumstead Marshes some 500 acres would be available, and a great deal of work could be found there in the making of cartways and fencing, so that the land might be made suitable for similar purposes—indeed, 25 acres of that land has just been secured by the vestry for the purpose of dealing with their refuse. Then again, in the Wandsworth district there are 20 acres of low-lying land recently acquired by the Wandsworth District Board. Again, 50 acres at Hackney Marshes, subject to flooding, could be dealt with, I think, very successfully by unskilled labour; and altogether, from a careful estimate, I find that within the County of London there are 10,000 acres of land which is not ripe for building which could be dealt with in various ways, some of it would not be built upon for many years. I might add to this, as showing the outside opportunity within the county, that a well-considered plan for foreshore reclamation on the River Thames would certainly help to solve the problem in the East-end. And I think I am safe in saying that such a district as the Poplar District Board of Works would regard a scheme of that kind very favourably if there was any prospect of getting such assistance as I have indicated from the Common Poor Fund. To show how that may be practically dealt with, I may remind the Committee of the interesting account which is given in the Blue Book upon the "Unemployed" of the Abbey Mills scheme at page 238. The Commissioner says, in the first paragraph: "Inasmuch as this scheme appears to have been among the most carefully devised, and the most fully recorded, of all the undertakings of last winter noticed in the present volume, it has been thought advisable to describe it in greater detail than most of the other schemes." I may just give a general statement with regard to this scheme, leaving the further particulars to be asked for by any of the Committee if they are desired.

Chairman.

3111. May we take it that you accept the account given of it in the Blue Book on the "unemployed"?—Yes; of course, the Blue Book simply states the figures. There are bearings of the case which are outside the statement.

Mr. *Bousfield.*

3112. I believe an attempt was being made a few days ago to start that work again this year. Can you tell us whether the Lord Mayor has collected enough money for this purpose?—I believe the amount received up to date is not very encouraging. I think, probably, the appointment of this Committee would cause some people to hold their hands until they saw what proposals might come from us. I think perhaps at this stage I will place myself in the hands of the Committee if honourable Members wish to ask me any questions.

Mr. *John Wilson* (Govan).

3113. I think you said that a large amount of land in the neighbourhood of London that was lying waste had been brought into cultivation as market gardens by the sweepings of the streets?—Yes; I gave you the figures just now.

3114. There is still a large quantity of the same land to develope in the same way round London; do you think that could easily be come at?—These are quite recent figures.

3115. And do you think that it would help to solve the problem of the unemployed if the machinery which you have indicated could be put into operation, whereby men who were willing to work could be set upon that land to bring it into cultivation, and that that would be a benefit to the State as well as to the local distress?—My reference to that outside land, Sir, is only to this extent: I think that the first effort of the local authority should be to put these men on test work (and it cannot be very much more) within their own area. I only suggest an outlet of this kind as useful in cases where a parish might say: "We have done all our works, and we have no need for any extra assistance."

3116. You do not think there would be any necessity for the State to subsidise the local authorities with a certain amount of money to set the thing in operation?—My recommendations are confined distinctly to the Metropolitan question, and I have not sufficient experience to guide the Committee as to the larger question.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

3117. Can you account for the fact that these street sweepings produce such a fertilizing and profitable result on the Isle of Dogs, and are so difficult to dispose of elsewhere?—Well, it certainly came as a surprise to me. Whether it is due to the extra amount of digging in, the manipulation that the material gets, or what, there is the fact that the land was certainly a "desert," and now it has "blossomed as the rose."

3118. Can you say what sort of land it was before—was it clay land?—I should think clay. It would be of the nature of Essex soil, but a good deal of it, I should rather think, would be made land, land of that description.

3119. Is not a great deal of it below the level of the river?—It was subject, of course, to floodings.

3120. And below high water mark, a great deal of it?—Yes, the Isle of Dogs, in the old days, used to be flooded rather frequently.

3121. You spoke of some low-lying land in the Wandsworth district, what do you propose

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley*—continued.

to do with that, what kind of works would that lend itself to?—The Wandsworth District Board have taken 20 acres of that. I am not able to inform the Committee what the project is, but they have taken it, and are prepared to deal with it.

3122. What do you think you could do with foreshore reclamation?—Take the eastern side of the river; there are certain portions which, without interfering with the more profitable of the wharves, I am advised could be dealt with successfully, and improve the river, and probably improve the trade of that district.

3123. About what distance down the stream have you in your mind?—As you get towards Poplar, taking the stretch of frontage between Limehouse onward.

Mr. *John Burns.*

3124. Between Limehouse and Greenwich, and on the other side?—Yes; that is what I have in my mind.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

3125. You mean reclamations which at present do not attract private enterprise?—Precisely.

3126. Can you tell us anything of the way in which Mr. McDougall, who has worked this market garden scheme in the Isle of Dogs, selects the men for his allotments, or whatever they may be?—I have not, unfortunately, the papers here, but I believe that the land is managed by a committee of the men themselves, and that the applications are considered by this committee; whether they ballot for them or not I do not know, but there is some way by which they give preference to certain applicants.

3127. I mean, were they offered in the open market originally, or given to unemployed men by preference, or was there any other principle of selection that you can tell the Committee of?—Mr. McDougall became responsible for the land in the first instance; it soon became known that he had the land, and applications came in for portions of it (I think) in an informal sort of way; there was no advertisement, or anything of that kind.

3128. Then, substantially, it was an open market business?—Well, I should fancy that certain men in the district would have preference, men known to Mr. McDougall; of course, he has been for long associated with that district. His business was originally there, when he was in business.

3129. But the tenancies were not limited to the unemployed?—Oh, no. I merely cited the case as showing that land of that nature could be dealt with, that labour of a profitable and pleasant kind could be found.

3130. Is there any maximum limit to the benefit which a parish may receive under the Common Poor Fund Acts?—It is simply governed, I believe, by the number of indoor paupers.

3131. Without maximum limit?—Without maximum limit; I think so.

Mr. *John Burns.*

3132. It does not exceed 5*d.* per day, does it?—No; it is 5*d.* per head per pauper. Of course, it has encouraged a good many parishes to get the people into the workhouse; that has been the point of it, and in that way, in my judgment, it has acted to some extent injuriously.

Mr. *Renshaw.*

3133. You have stated the objects to which the money to be derived from the Common Poor Fund would be devoted. I think you gave us the whole of the objects, but you did not specify all the relative amounts that were contributed under any of those heads. Is it not the fact that by very much the larger amount of the money that is derived from that Common Poor Fund is spent on the indoor poor, pauper children and insane poor?—No doubt.

3134. Of that, on page 437 of the Local Government Board Report of 1893, there is a tabulated statement?—Yes, page 437.

3135. I think you find the figures given there as to the expenditure for each year from 1879 to 1893 on the various objects to which this money can be devoted?—That is so.

3136. Will you be good enough to state to us what the amount was in 1893, or will you state what four or five of the principal items were in 1893 of expenditure from that fund?—1893, maintenance of indoor poor, 269,047*l.*; pauper children, 176,027*l.*; insane poor, 255,489*l.*; paid officers' salaries, 240,949*l.*; rations for officers, 79,258.

3137. I think those are the largest items, are they not?—Yes; there is the maintenance of persons suffering from small-pox or fevers, 47,910*l.* Those are the large items.

3138. That would rather point to the fact that up to the present time this income derived from the Common Poor Fund has been pretty limited in its application, and that a greater amount has been spent upon indoor relief; while I understand the proposal you have made, and the suggestion you have thrown out in regard to its application in the future, to be that local authorities should put work in hand and obtain money through the guardians out of the Common Poor Fund; you would practically propose to extend the use of the money derived from this fund—which has hitherto been limited rather strictly to a system of indoor relief—to outdoor relief, is not that the case?—Well, my view is, that if this provision was made through the Common Poor Fund, a great deal of the indoor pauperism might be avoided. If I may, in answer to that, draw your attention to a Report recently published from a district, which is a typical district (the Poplar district), I think I can answer that question effectively. The Poplar district have been entitled to considerable credit for trying to cope with this question of the unemployed. This is a paragraph in the Report of the Board, signed by the Controller. After setting out the details of this scheme, it says: "On the whole, it may safely be said the experiment proved a success. The works were necessary, and the men in want." It is this particular scheme, I may mention, that Mr. Hills, who was in the chair, a day or two ago, generously contributed 1,000*l.* to, and the district found the rest of the money. I should hope that under the scheme which

Mr. *Renshaw*—continued.

which I propose the Common Poor Fund might take the place of such a gentleman as Mr. Hills. "Mr. Hills' generous contribution supplied the deficiency that would otherwise have fallen upon the rates if the whole burden of the cost had been borne by the District Board, and as the whole of the men lived in the district the money earned was spent in the neighbourhood to the undoubted advantage of tradespeople and others. On the subject of the cost having proved to be heavier than under ordinary circumstances, it is only necessary to refer to what has happened elsewhere under similar conditions; for instance, wood-chopping resulted in a loss of 6*s.* 6*d.* per 100 bundles, the cost of production having been 9*s.* and the market rate 2*s.* 6*d.* This shows the cost amounted to nearly four times as much as it should have done, and it must be remembered that wood-chopping is comparatively easy work. If paving works undertaken by other authorities be considered, it will be found the same or a greater excess has resulted, so that the difference in Poplar is not by any means remarkable. On the other hand is to be weighed the comfort secured to hundreds of homes, and the relief to the poor rates; for it is an absolute certainty that but for the institution of the works herein referred to, the recipients of the money earned as wages for labour cheerfully rendered would have been compelled in many instances to break up their homes and seek refuge in the workhouse."

3139. The definition you gave us of the test of the manner in which this Common Poor Fund was to be expended was:—for services deemed to be of common concern?—Yes.

3140. Now does it not occur to you, in regard to the carrying out of the scheme which you have suggested, that if the boards of guardians are to get money out of this Common Fund to enable them to carry out the works, those works would not be, in every case, matters "of common concern," and that the making of streets or bringing in waste lands might affect, and beneficially affect, particular areas which would not be a matter of common concern to the whole of London?—That is quite possible, Sir. The class of work undertaken with this money would be work, I think, not otherwise done by the local authority. It is quite true that it might benefit—and would benefit—the district concerned; but my contention is that but for some such assistance you cannot get poor parishes to undertake (in some cases) the necessary amount of parish renovation and street cleaning which they shall undertake.

3141. Then, would not there be a very great danger (I am only suggesting this, having regard to the evidence we have already had before us of the different manner in which the guardians distribute outdoor relief in London), that in certain districts money derived from this Common Poor Fund, if the guardians were empowered to deal with it in the way you suggest, might be appropriated to objects which it would not be devoted to under other boards of guardians. I think you have drawn, yourself, a strong contrast. You just now told us that the board

Mr. *Renshaw*—continued.

of guardians in Islington administer matters very well in Islington. I do not think, in all probability, you would say the same of the board of guardians of St. Olave's?—Being a London Member, I would rather not indulge in criticisms of other districts.

3142. I will ask you, then, whether you do not think the scheme you have suggested to us is open to difficulties in regard to administration, having regard to the different way in which existing boards of guardians administer outdoor relief at present?—There is no doubt that that is a danger; and that is a danger which I think could, and would, be met by this addition to the Common Poor Fund. If this addition were made, it is clear (I think it must be obvious) that the Local Government Board would have to take the matter in hand, and proper regulations would have to be issued as to the administration of the money, and I think, Sir, that some officer would be necessary to see that the action in the various districts was uniform, and based upon sound principles. I might draw your attention, if you should ask me as to provisions for protecting London generally from the folly of certain sections of London, to the suggestions made by the Charity Organization Society. They are set out on page 152 of the "unemployed" volume. The paragraph to which I refer commences: "To deal with large numbers of people quickly and effectually, 'tests' are necessary no less than inquiry." Then it says: "Roughly speaking, applications come from three classes: (1) Thrifty and careful men; (2) Men of different grades of respectability, with a decent home; (3) The idle, loafing class, or those brought low by drink or vice." The recommendations which follow, I think, are sufficient to meet the case.

3143. The distribution of the Common Poor Fund now is decided under the Local Government Board, is it not?—It is not "decided"; it is governed entirely by Act of Parliament, so much per head per day per pauper; it is automatic.

3144. Who takes charge of the collection of the rate?—It forms part of the poor rate.

Mr. *Stuart-Wortley.*

3145. Who acts as the clearing-house?—I think the London County Council. It is a matter of book-keeping.

Mr. *Bartley.*

3146. Practically, it is like equalisation, is it not?—Yes, practically, it is like equalisation. The balance is struck between the two, and it is handed over, as I have stated, in the description which I gave.

Mr. *Renshaw.*

3147. In regard to the operation which you say has been carried out in the Isle of Dogs by Mr. McDougall, I think you stated that the rent charged to Mr. McDougall was a nominal rent?—Yes.

3148. That probably would not be the case if a large quantity of land was taken in other parts of the Metropolis?—Mr. McDougall paid what was the value of the land for the moment, that is

Mr. *Renshaw*—continued.

to say, the rent which he paid was not in any sense a charity rent.

3149. It was not a "nominal" rent, then: it was the real rent?—Yes. Did I say "a nominal rent"?

3150. Yes, I understood you to say "a nominal rent."—I meant a nominal rent in the sense that it was a very low rent—low, compared with what has resulted since.

3151. You did not tell us what the acreage was?—I cannot tell you; I do not know whether Mr. Burns knows.

Mr. *John Burns.*

3152. It is about 22 acres that is leased to Mr. McDougall, is it not?—I believe that is about the quantity.

Mr. *Renshaw.*

3153. I wish to bring that out, because what would apply to 22 acres might not apply—or be capable of application—on a larger scale?—I appreciate that. I merely drew attention to the large quantity of land that might be available for similar purposes.

Mr. *Bartley.*

3154. As I understand you, if any scheme were arranged in London for dealing with the unemployed, you think it would be better to take the money from the Common Poor Fund rather than from the Imperial Treasury; is that what I am to understand?—That is my view.

3155. But you see there are difficulties in taking the Common Poor Fund for outside purposes, inasmuch as some parishes might gain somewhat unfairly against the others?—No doubt. I would put against that the extraordinary difficulty which some London parishes have in dealing with this question of the unemployed. I would submit that the rateable value per head of the population should be considered. A rate of 7*s.* in Bow is a much greater punishment to the shopkeeper in Bow than a rate of 7*s.* in the £ is to the shopkeeper in the Strand. I am prepared to admit that some districts would benefit. It would be a boon to some districts if this plan were carried out.

3156. But you think the evils resulting would be less than those that would result from drawing it from the Imperial Exchequer?—I think so.

3157. Then, in all these cases, I understand you to say that you think there ought to be a test work as an essential condition?—I do.

3158. That you hold to?—That I hold to.

3159. A *bonâ fide* test, I mean?—A *bonâ fide* test.

3160. To absolutely sift those who are willing to do fair work?—Absolutely to sift those.

3161. Then you said something about those who were out of work through no fault of their own; would you include in that those who were out on strike?—No, I do not think they could be included.

3162. You would not consider that they should be included?—I do not see how they could be included.

3163. You see it is a very important point?—Oh, it is an important point. I think, Sir, that those who take that line should properly look to

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

their trades unions, who are generally able to cope with that special difficulty.

3164. They should count their own cost, and not throw themselves upon this special fund?—That is my view, Sir.

3165. Then I should like to ask you about the rate of wages that you think ought to be given in these cases?—I should say, without hesitation, that the rate of wages should be that commonly paid in the market. I may say on that, that we based our experiment at Abbey Mills on that rate. We got excellent work, work which was spoken very highly of by our engineer, and I strongly advocate the current rate being paid.

3166. Are they to work every day in the week?—I should say not. In some cases it might be desirable; but my view is, that if you carefully pick the men (and I am only pleading for the more deserving class), if you limit the time rather than limit the wages, you will do all that is necessary to move the men on to their regular employment as soon as it is obtainable.

3167. As regards the rate of wages, would that be the rate of wages they were gaining in their own trade before they were out of work?—Oh, no; it must be the rate of wages governing the class of work upon which the parish put them.

3168. Then a respectable working-man, directly he was out of work, would be able to come to this special work provided by the parish?—Not at all; no. I reckon, Sir, that the machinery would involve something of this kind: The man would apply to the officer appointed—whether the relieving officer, or some other officer specially appointed under the new provision (I should hope some special officer might be appointed, so that the stigma of pauperism might be avoided), and that officer would have to be satisfied that the man was in real distress; that it was not a case of being out of work just for a week or two, but a case of helping a worthy man over a period of difficulty, and to avoid breaking up his home and the contingency of the workhouse.

3169. You say not out of work for a week or two; would you limit definitely the time he had been out of work?—Such provision might be possible, and might be wise.

3170. Then, would not that encourage the man to remain out of work in order to get parish relief?—I do not think so.

Chairman.

3171. It must be coupled with time and coupled with distress?—Coupled with distress.

Mr. *Bartley.*

3172. You cannot help seeing great danger in any rule you might make on these lines?—I do not think so; everything would depend upon the nature of the enquiries made. I may direct the attention of the honourable Member to the copy of the question paper which we used in the Abbey Mills scheme. I think any workman who could get through that sieve would be entitled to assistance.

3173. Would it not be much simpler to give a man a smaller wage, so that he should leave your special work as soon as possible?—I think not

Mr. *Bartley*—continued.

not. I think that dispirits the man, and does not do any more than shortening the hours.

Mr. *Logan.*

3174. The shorter hours give him a smaller wage?—It gives him a smaller wage.

Mr. *Bartley.*

3175. Would not he earn just as much the other way?—Probably so, but I think the half day at 6*d.* an hour will do the man more good, and give him more chance of getting other employment than a whole day at 3*d.* an hour.

3176. Would not he be much more anxious to leave the work, if he only got 3*d.* an hour, in order to supply himself with his own work?—I do not think the men of the class which I have indicated would be.

3177. Then, how are you to prevent them working every day; would you keep a register of them?—Certainly.

3178. And prevent a man coming?—Certainly.

3179. Suppose one man was a single man and another man had a large family, would you employ them both the same number of days?—The arrangements we made in the paper to which I have just referred give an order of preference, and if you will allow me just to refer to these particulars, I should recommend something of a similar kind—at all events, for a commencement. The conditions which we apply to casual dockers (and they were the most difficult class to deal with) were, 12 months' residence in the parish, only married men, those who had recently slept in common lodging-houses excluded, all over 65 excluded; those who were taken on were mostly under 55. I do not put those out as definite conditions, but I think some conditions of that class would have to be framed.

3180. Is not that, practically, the very basis on which the Paris experiment was tried in 1848?—I, of course, know something about the Paris experiment, but I am not prepared to express any opinion upon it.

3181. Was not that limited to those who lived in Paris?—I do not think I can answer questions on that. A very excellent Report of the whole business is contained in *this* Blue Book.

3182. Of course, you know that that was a great failure?—I do.

3183. And that the number who applied was enormous in two months?—That is so.

3184. You do not think that would follow with your scheme?—I do not think so, indeed.

3185. Will you say why?—In the first place, any superficial reading of the Parisian scheme shows that it was to begin with a gigantic muddle.

3186. You do not think it is possible to have a gigantic muddle in London?—I do not think so; I think after this object-lesson—which I am prepared to enter into very fully—all the muddle can very easily be avoided.

Mr. *John Burns.*

3187. Was not the Paris scheme a centralising relief works, and yours a decentralising relief works?—Yes, and that is a very important distinction.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson.*

3188. Do you not think that the cost of pauper lunatics should not be included in the Poor-law, in London?—I do not see at all that they should be separate from the list of in-door paupers.

3189. Are you aware what the unions in the East-end of London charge for pauper lunatics?—I have not taken that out separately.

3190. Are you aware that all the guardians feel that that charge of pauper lunatics should not be included in the Poor-law fund, but that the monies so charged should be expended in relieving the unemployed?—I believe that certain opinions have been expressed in that direction; but I have no suggestion to make in connection with that item.

3191. But you feel that like many other items the charge for pauper lunatics, it being included in the Poor-law fund, is one which should not come under that head at all?—I have no opinion to express on that point, Sir. I do not think it has to do with the scheme I have laid before the Committee.

3192. Do I gather that the districts that have received large sums under the Equalization of Rates Bill have expended that money?—I believe that many of them have considerably added to their works for sanitation and kindred matters; but I submit that after all that is done there is still plenty of room for the extension which I have indicated.

3193. And you do not think that that fund which is given to the various districts under the Equalization of Rates Bill would be sufficient to meet the needs of the employees?—I do not. I have given figures to show the diversity which still exists between the wealthier and the poorer parishes.

3194. And you think that that money has already been expended, but you are not aware that there are some districts which have been very much puzzled to know what to do with the large sums of money they have received?—I am perfectly certain that the districts in the poorer parts of London have not been puzzled to know what to do with the money they have received.

3195. Would it surprise you to know that out of the 20 districts there are some which have not yet applied the money?—I do not know that *application* is necessary. The money is sent to each district automatically, and, failing any work in the district to which the money can be applied, of course the money goes in the relief of the rates.

3196. I took it that you made a comparison between St. George's and some other parishes, showing, for instance, that in the extreme East-end parish it only decreased the amount of their rates by something like 4*d.*, whereas in St. James's it had only increased them by something like 4½*d.*; that is so, is it not?—That is so.

3197. Now, you spoke of the population of the five unions just now; did you include the seven divisions of the Tower Hamlets?—Five divisions.

3198. Five divisions only?—Yes, the St. George's Union.

3199. Whitechapel?—Yes.

3200. Poplar?—Yes.

3201. St. George's?—Yes.

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

3202. Bow and Bromley?—Mile End and Limehouse.

3203. And Poplar?—And Poplar.

3204. How do you arrive at the population for 1894?—By the estimated population of the Registrar General's Return.

3205. I see the population for 1891 is taken from the Census?—Yes.

3206. The figures are exactly alike?—Yes.

3207. The reason I am asking you this question is this: My recent returns of the population of the seven divisions of the Tower Hamlets are 700,000?—Yes; but you have added two divisions, of course.

3208. I have added the divisions such as you, I think, describe?—No; the divisions which I placed before the Committee were: Mile End Old Town, St. George's-in-the-East, Limehouse, Poplar, and Whitechapel. I can give the figures in each case if desired.

3209. The increase of population appears to be only 2,000 in three years?—That is so.

3209A. Would you tell the Committee how you would propose to deal with those men who refused to work under your scheme?—Hand them over to the Poor-law authority, or to prison.

3210. And you propose to pay those men the usual rate of wages, and we will say that no person shall be employed on the work for more than six days of six hours?—Yes, that is my proposal, a shortening of hours rather than a reduction of wages.

3211. But you give them the full wage for that time?—For the class of work they are doing.

3212. And do you propose any scheme of voluntary subscriptions?—I have not anticipated that; that is quite a possible thing, but I have not anticipated that.

3213. You have not anticipated any scheme of voluntary subscription?—No; I gave a case in which a voluntary subscription had been very useful to a district board in carrying out some such scheme. I can imagine a case where a wealthy man would be inclined to assist such a fund. If the local authority were carrying out a subsidy from the Common Poor Fund in an effective and useful way, I can quite imagine that some persons able to do it might add to such a fund. I do not know that such a thing would be out of the question.

3214. You do not think it would be a good thing, in conjunction with your scheme, that a sort of proportion (we will say) of voluntary help should be added to by local help?—I should not make it a condition. I think that this scheme should rest upon this assumption—that London as a whole is responsible for dealing with this problem, and ought to deal with it through its existing machinery; I think that the local authority should be made to do the thing properly, and provided with the means of doing it.

3215. Then, have you any idea how long a scheme, such as you propose now, would take to put into operation?—I think that it could be put into operation very quickly. Suppose that this additional clause were added to the Acts governing the Common Poor Fund, I am perfectly certain that after the break up of the frost many

Mr. *Wootton Isaacson*—continued.

parishes will want a great deal of work doing; many hundreds of men could be employed at once, supposing they answered to the conditions which I have intimated.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

3216. What you have been proposing applies, of course, to London only?—To London only. Of course, in London we have this Common Poor Fund, and so far as I know there is nothing quite analogous to it.

3217. Just so, I was just coming to that point.—But on that question I would like to state, Sir, that other large towns, which are generally treated as a whole, are able to cope with this question without the assistance of a Common Poor Fund, and that London not enjoying the privileges which came under the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 are compelled to ask for assistance which other towns do not need.

Mr. *John Burns.*

3218. Through the lack of unification?—Through the lack of unification.

Mr. *Keir-Hardie.*

3219. What I was about to ask was whether the principle of the Common Poor Fund as now applied to London could not be made applicable to the entire nation; and whether it would not be desirable to make it so in order to meet this class of cases we are now dealing with?—That is possible, Sir, but I do not think that my Metropolitan experience will enable me to express any opinion having to do with the entire country; I must leave other Members to do that.

3220. For this winter—for the time between now and when your excellent proposals could be put into practice—would you favour the making of a grant from the Treasury to assist local authorities in coping with the distress which exists in London and elsewhere?—My view is, Sir, that each district should, so far as possible, bear its own troubles. London is regarded as a county—I think that the whole of the county should be made responsible to cope with this difficulty. I do not favour a State grant. I think that if the same principle could be applied probably to the whole of the County of Essex, it might assist the troubles which have to do with the district of West Ham.

Mr. *Pickersgill.*

3221. You have been pressed with the definition of a Metropolitan Common Poor Fund as applied to purposes of a common concern, and I understand that you bring your own scheme within that definition by saying that the relief of the unemployed is a common concern in London?—Precisely.

3222. Then it has been objected that under your scheme one locality might get work effected which it would do in any case, and that it would be valuable to the locality to get the cost of that work defrayed out of the Common Fund—I understand that your safeguard against that is the control of the Local Government Board?—That was in my mind.

3223. Then

Mr. *Pickersgill*—continued.

3223. Then you have been further pressed as to whether this is a scheme applicable to the immediate difficulty. Do not you think that a single clause of an Act of Parliament would be sufficient to give the power?—Indeed, Sir, I think that the thing is so ready to hand that it might be done in our interim Report, if we place one before the House.

3224. I understood that that was your scheme? —Yes.

3225. Of course, you recognise that Statutory power would be necessary?—Yes.

3226. It would be merely, as I understand, a clause of an Act of Parliament adding this particular item to those items which may be charged on the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund?—Yes.

3227. And then all that would be necessary would be the consent of the Local Government Board to any particular work in a particular district as a relief work of this character?—Precisely.

Mr. *Bousfield.*

3228. Except, I think, the one work you mentioned—street cleaning—the other works such as you propose would be in the nature of local improvement works, would they not?—Well, mainly the works suggested in the Local Government Board Circular; five or six are set out there, as you will remember, on page 186 of the Unemployed Report, with the additional suggestion that, failing such works, some extension might be made of like nature to that undertaken in the Abbey Mills scheme.

3229. Then they would be, in the main, local improvement works either with reference to the land or other work of some kind?—I hope so.

3230. Why should you take the money for making local improvements out of a Poor-law fund? Your only view is in order to spread the burden over the whole community, I presume, that is why you pitch upon the Common Poor Fund. That is your sole object, is it not?—Will you just put the question again?

3231. Why should you take the money which is to be spent in local improvements at the ordinary rates of wages out of a Poor-law fund? —For this reason: The money is allotted, and is taken for the purpose of dealing with a phase of poverty, and the works which are undertaken by the money cannot be regarded in the light of ordinary improvement works, because, as I have shown, by a reference to the Poplar Report, such works could not be compared in the light of value received with works done by special and fully competent workmen under a contractor or a local surveyor.

3232. Then, according to your view, you would not get work of the work of the wages that you paid out?—I do not think it is possible.

3233. Do not you think that as you are going to get something for your money the proper fund is a fund out of which improvements could properly be paid?—I do not think so in this case. It is intimately associated with the Common Poor Fund, because it is an attempt to prevent certain deserving people becoming indoor paupers, it is really a branch of the same work.

Mr. *Bousfield*—continued.

3234. I will put one more question; I do not want to prolong it, because I see the time is short. You know that works are prepared, in many cases, by the local authorities for the winter in order to employ as many men as they can then?—Yes.

3235. And that where the works are permanent in their nature they get a loan from the Local Government Board?—Yes.

3236. And those loans come out of the ordinary district rates?—Yes.

3237. Would it not introduce confusion if some of the work of the unemployed thus provided was provided out of the district rate, and some other part out of the Common Poor Fund? —It is merely a matter of book-keeping.

3238. If you could get a fund such as the Equalisation of Rates Bill provides, for instance, which really does spread the whole of the burden over the whole of London, would it not be better to go to such a fund, rather than to the Common Poor Fund?—I think not. I think it is very important that the co-operation, recommended by the Local Government Board Circular, between the guardians and the local authorities, should be confirmed by this scheme.

3239. Yes, I agree; but the "co-operation" you suggest is simply to take the money out of the poor fund; the "co-operation" which they suggest is some scheme for the purpose of handing over persons who apply to the guardians to the local authorities, in order to be employed, is it not?—I have suggested that the necessary inquiry might be made, through the officers of the guardians, or a special officer, but, under any circumstances, I think that all the information that the guardians could give as to the nature of the case should be at the disposal of the local authority.

3240. Do not you think it is desirable that this should fit in with any general system which might be applicable throughout the country?—I am afraid I must confine my opinions to London.

3241. Supposing relief works are undertaken, in Swansea we will say, or in Lancashire, if they should be paid for out of a Poor-law fund in London, then they ought to be paid for out of a Poor-law fund in Swansea, ought not they; the same principle would apply?—I can imagine the same principle applying to the whole of a county, so that the wealthier portion of the county should bear part of the burden of the weaker.

3242. I am speaking as to whether it is to come out of the poor fund, or out of the district rate?—Outside London, I am sorry to say, I cannot give any opinion.

Mr. *John Burns.*

3243. It would be in the county rate, would it not?—It would be in the county rate.

Mr. *Bousfield.*

3244. There would be no difficulty here in London, would there, in the County Council collecting as part of their rate the amount that had to be distributed in the different areas in London?—As regards collecting, of course we can collect money very well.

Mr. *Bousfield*—continued.

3245. I mean as regards being a poor rate?—Yes.

3246. Only one other point: You say you would, to use your own expression, put the men you put on these works through a "sieve"?—I should.

3247. Which would perhaps only let one-tenth of them through?—Only let the deserving portion through.

3248. The case of the others your scheme does not meet?—The other part I think the Poor-law fully meets.

3249. You made a suggestion which I was glad of: I think your view was that as to irreclaimable loafers who refuse to work there should be some penal method of dealing with them?—I think the present machinery is about the thing.

3250. You know that in Belgium, for instance, do you not, they have a penal system of dealing with this class?—I have not seen the system; I have read about it.

3251. Do not you think some scheme of that kind would be absolutely necessary to supplement any scheme which really only dealt with the proportion (the deserving) of the unemployed?—I do not think that any addition is necessary to the existing machinery for them; I think it is sufficiently prohibitory.

Mr. *Billson.*

3252. I suppose, the whole of the basis being poor relief, it naturally comes out of the Common Poor Fund?—Yes.

3253. And that probably the cost of relief in the workhouse would be saved to a corresponding extent, if not to a greater?—I believe it would be saved considerably. The figures show that the expense of indoor pauperism is advancing by leaps and bounds in some districts of London.

3254. Your object in using this poor fund is to help parishes that are unable to set to work on relief works of their own accord?—Yes.

3255. How many of such parishes are there; do you know at all?—That is rather a difficult question to answer without calculation.

3256. Would you say a third or a fourth of them, or what?—I should take generally those parishes which receive relief under the Equalisation Bill. There is, of course, rather a notable exception in the case of Islington, but still a great many unemployed may be found in Islington.

3257. There are now, you consider, a certain number of parishes which are prevented from carrying on useful work, because they consider that they are not able to raise the necessary money?—Clearly.

3258. Have you calculated at all what increase there would have to be in the common poor rate?—I think not a very large increase. I am not prepared with figures on that point, but I do not anticipate that it would be a serious matter.

3259. If you had power to apply the Common Poor Fund in that direction, you are of opinion that, practically, forthwith there would be a certain amount of work to be done?—Forthwith.

Mr. *John Burns.*

3260. I gather, in short, that your immediate scheme practically means that to the existing powers the Metropolis enjoys under the Common Poor Fund should be added the power of dealing with distress arising from lack of employment. You believe that that, coupled with the benefit the Metropolis enjoys under the Equalisation of Rates Bill, would enable many localities to deal with exceptional distress?—I do, Sir.

3261. You are aware, are you not, that the improvement contributions from the old Metropolitan Board, and the existing London County Council, to localities, for making different improvements, establishes rather a precedent for your scheme?—I do. I am obliged to you for drawing attention to it.

3262. So that we have practically three funds now. The Common Poor Fund, which you want extended, the equalization of rates fund, and improvement contributions, a third and a fourth half or two-thirds, as the Central Council may decide?—That is so.

3263. Now, am I to gather from you that if the Common Poor Fund was raised from 5*d.* per day per head of indoor paupers to, say, 5½*d.* or 6*d.* per day per head of potential paupers, your scheme would provide employment without making them either indoor or outdoor paupers, and would be but a very slight extension of what now prevails?—That is my view. I think, in all probability, an extra 1*d.* would enable us to, at all events, deal with the keen edge of the problem.

3264. Then if the Common Poor Fund was extended as you have suggested, and its amount proportionately increased, you think that it would be better to pay, and cheaper to pay as a matter of economy, from that fund the actual unemployed men who were potential paupers in the *malt* of wages, than without that to pay it in the *meal* of pauper rate?—I do, indeed.

3265. Am I to gather from you that this fund should be operative when the percentage of unemployed became abnormal, say a fixed percentage?—That is so; I would leave the settlement of that question to the experts of the Local Government Board, enabling any local authority to make a representation, and allowing the Board to decide whether sufficient evidence had been given to show that the district was exceptionally distressed.

3266. And in the event, under your suggested provisions, of external work for the relief of the unemployed of a parish for whom there was not work inside the parish, you think an equitable arrangement could be made with an adjoining parish in which work was situated, equitable to London as a whole?—I think so.

3267. Have you had any experience of the Camberwell Refuse and Streets Sweeping Farm in Surrey?—I have not seen that, I am sorry to say.

3268. Have you heard of the Glasgow Refuge Farm?—I have heard of the Glasgow Refuse Farm.

3269. Would you suggest the establishment by the various parishes of similar farms to act as a nucleus of an unemployed agency when exceptional distress prevailed?—I can imagine very useful work being done in that direction.

3270. You spoke about Wandsworth: Did the land to which you referred come within the Bill

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

Bill that passed the House the year before last?—The Small Holdings?

3271. No; did the land at Wandsworth, to which you referred, come within the provisions of the Bill passed two years ago in relation to high-water mark, that houses a certain depth above or below should not be built upon, that is the land, is it not?—You refer to the General Powers Bill of the London County Council?

3272. Yes.—The Low-lying Lands Clause?

3273. Yes.—I think that is so.

3274. You believe that if that land were used for the purposes of the unemployed, as it cannot at present be built upon, no harm would be done?—No harm would be done.

Mr. *John Burns*—continued.

3275. Would not you suggest, in the matter of the reclamation of foreshores, if that work could be carried out by your scheme, that it would be a good thing if the Thames Conservancy could be induced to co-operate with the local authority?—If that body could be induced to co-operate, there is no limit to the amount of useful work which might be done, so far as London is concerned. Of course, the foreshore of the Thames is a great opportunity.

3276. And that work could be done particularly at distressed times, could it not?—Particularly.

3277. *Climate* would not materially interfere with it?—Climate would really not much affect it.

SECOND REPORT

FROM THE

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

DISTRESS FROM WANT OF EMPLOYMENT,

WITH AN

APPENDIX.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed,*
7 *May* 1895.

LONDON:
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253.

Distress from Want of Employment.

Ordered,—[*Wednesday, 13th February* 1895]:—That a Select Committee be appointed to consider and report as to—(*a*) The extent to which Distress, arising from Want of Employment, prevails; (*b*) The powers at present possessed by Local or Central Authorities in relation to such cases; (*c*) Any steps which may be taken, whether by changes in Legislation or Administration, to deal with the evils arising therefrom; and (*d*) To make an Interim Report to the House at the earliest possible date on what steps should be taken either by Parliament, the Departments of State, or Local Authorities, to meet the Distress this Winter.

Ordered,—[*Friday, 15th February* 1895]:—That the Select Committee do consist of Twenty-five Members.

Committee nominated—of,—

Mr. Acland.
Mr. Bartley.
Mr. Benn.
Mr. Billson.
Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton.
Mr. Boscawen.
Mr. Bousfield.
Mr. John Burns.
Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.
Mr. Crean.
Mr. Keir-Hardie.
Mr. Heneage.
Mr. Wootton Isaacson.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Lawrence.
Mr. Logan.
Mr. Mather.
Mr. Pickersgill.
Mr. David Randell.
Mr. Renshaw.
Mr. Round.
Mr. Whiteley.
Mr. John Wilson (*Durham*).
Mr. John Wilson (*Govan*).
Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

That the Committee have power to send for Persons, Papers, and Records.

That Seven be the Quorum of the Committee.

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SECOND REPORT.

THE SELECT COMMITTEE appointed to consider and Report as to —

(*a*) The extent to which Distress, arising from want of Employment, prevails;

(*b*) The powers at present possessed by Local or Central Authorities in relation to such cases;

(*c*) Any steps which may be taken, whether by changes in Legislation or Administration, to deal with the evils arising therefrom; and

(*d*) To make an interim Report to the House at the earliest possible Date on what steps should be taken either by Parliament, the Departments of State, or Local Authorities, to meet the Distress this Winter.

Had made further progress in the Matters to them referred; and have agreed to the following SECOND REPORT:—

YOUR Committee, in submitting their First, or interim, Report, were unable to add to it the Returns they had received, through the Local Government Board, from Local Authorities in England and Wales, in reply to a Circular Inquiry as to the extent of distress prevailing.

While proceeding with the General Inquiry, they now submit to your Honourable House Abstracts of these Returns as received up to date, together with certain other documents laid before your Committee.

7 May 1895.

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APPENDIX.

APPENDIX, No. 1.

PAPER handed in by Sir *Hugh Owen*, K.C.B., 20 February 1895.

To the Guardians of the Poor of the several Unions and Parishes named in the Schedules hereunto annexed;
To the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Parishes comprised in the said Unions, and the said several other Parishes named in the said Schedules;
To the Clerk or Clerks to the Justices of the Petty Sessions held for the Division or Divisions in which the said Unions and Parishes are situate;
And to all others whom it may concern.

WHEREAS the Poor Law Board, by their Order bearing date the Twenty-fifth day of August last, and addressed to the several Unions and Parishes named in the Schedules thereunto annexed, being the same as those mentioned in the Schedules hereunto annexed, did make certain rules and regulations for the administration of the relief to the out-door poor, and it is expedient that the same should be modified.

Now, therefore, we, the Poor Law Board, in pursuance of the authorities vested in us by an Act passed in the fifth year of the reign of His late Majesty King William the Fourth, intituled, "An Act for the Amendment and "better Administration of the Laws relating to the Poor in England and Wales," and by all other Acts amending the same, do hereby rescind the said Order, except so far as it rescinded any Order theretofore issued by the Poor Law Commissioners or Poor Law Board to the said unions and parishes named in the Schedules hereunto annexed, and except as to every matter done or commenced in obedience thereto; and we do hereby Order, Direct, and declare, with respect to each and every of the said unions and parishes, from and after the First day of January next, as follows:—

ARTICLE 1. Whenever the guardians allow relief to any able-bodied male person, out of the workhouse, one half at least of the relief so allowed shall be given in articles of food or fuel, or in other articles of absolute necessity.

ARTICLE 2. In any case in which the guardians allow relief for a longer period than one week to an indigent poor person, resident within their union or parish respectively, without requiring that such person shall be received into the workhouse, such relief shall be given or administered weekly, or at such more frequent periods as they may deem expedient.

ARTICLE 3. It shall not be lawful for the guardians or their officers—

To establish any applicant for relief in trade or business;

Nor to redeem from pawn for any such applicant any tools, implements, or other articles;

Nor to purchase and give to such applicant any tools, implements, or other articles, except articles of clothing or bedding where urgently needed and such articles as are herein-before referred to in Art. 1.;

Nor to pay, directly or indirectly, the expense of the conveyance of any poor person, unless conveyed under the provisions of some statute, or under an order of justices or other lawful authority, or in conformity with some Order or Regulation of the Poor Law Commissioners or the Poor Law Board, except in the following cases; viz.:—

1st. The case of a person conveyed to or from a district school, or an hospital or infirmary, or a lunatic asylum, or a house licensed or hospital registered for the reception of lunatics;

2nd. The case of a person conveyed to the workhouse of the union or parish in which such person is at the time chargeable;

3rd. The case of a person conveyed to or from any other workhouse or other house or establishment for the reception of poor persons, in which for the time being it shall be lawful for the guardians to place such person;

Nor to give money to or on account of any such applicant for the purpose of effecting any of the objects in this Article mentioned.

Nor to pay, wholly or in part, the rent of the house or lodging of any pauper, nor to apply any portion of the relief ordered to be given to any pauper in payment of any such rent, nor to retain any portion of such relief for the purpose of directly or indirectly discharging such rent, in full or in part, for any such pauper;

Provided always, that nothing in this Article contained shall apply to any shelter or temporary lodging procured for a poor person in any case of sudden or urgent necessity or mental imbecility.

ARTICLE 4. No relief shall be given from the poor rates of any of the said parishes, or of any parish comprised in any of the said unions, to any person who does not reside in some place within such parish or union respectively, save and except in the following cases:—

1st. The case of a person casually within such parish, and destitute.

2nd. The case of a person requiring relief on account of any sickness, accident, or bodily or mental infirmity, affecting him or her or any of his or her family.

3rd. The case of a widow, having a legitimate child dependent on her for support, and no illegitimate child born after the commencement of her widowhood, and who at the time of her husband's death was resident with him in some place other than the parish of her legal settlement, and not situated in the union in which such parish is comprised.

4th. The case of a child under the age of sixteen, maintained in a workhouse or establishment for the education of poor children not situate within the union or parish.

5th. The case of the wife or child residing within such parish or union of some person not residing therein.

6th. The case of a person who has been in the receipt of relief from such parish, or from some parish in the union from which he or she seeks relief, at some time within the twelve calendar months next preceeding the date of this Order.

ARTICLE 5. No relief shall be given to any able-bodied male person while he is employed for wages or other hire or remuneration by any person.

ARTICLE 6. Every able-bodied male person, if relieved out of the workhouse, shall be set to work by the guardians, and be kept employed under their direction and superintendence so long as he continues to receive relief.

ARTICLE 7. Provided that the regulations in Articles 5 and 6 shall not be imperative in the following cases :—

1st. The case of a person receiving relief on account of sudden and urgent necessity.

2nd. The case of a person receiving relief on account of any sickness, accident, or bodily or mental infirmity, affecting such person or any of his family.

3rd. The case of a person receiving relief for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the burial of any of his family.

4th. The case of the wife, child, or children of a person confined in any gaol or place of safe custody.

5th. The case of the wife, child, or children, resident within the parish or union, of a person not residing therein.

ARTICLE 8. The guardians shall, within thirty days after they have proceeded to act in execution of Art. 6, report to the Poor Law Board the place or places at which able-bodied male paupers shall be set to work, the sort or sorts of work in which they or any of them shall be employed, the times and mode of work, and the provision made for superintending them while working, and shall forthwith discontinue or alter the same, if the Poor Law Board should so require.

ARTICLE 9. No relief which shall be contrary to any regulation in this Order shall be given by way of loan, but any relief which may be given in conformity with the provisions of this Order to or on acconnt of any person to whom relief may be lawfully given above the age of twenty-one, or to his wife, or any part of his or her family under the age of sixteen, may, if the guardians shall think fit, be given by way of loan.

ARTICLE 10. If the guardians shall, upon consideration of the special circumstances of any particular case, deem it expedient to depart from any of the regulations herein-before contained (except those contained in Art. 3), and within twenty one days after such departure shall report the same, and the grounds thereof, to the Poor Law Board, the relief which may have been so given in such case by such guardians before an answer to such report shall have been returned by the said Board shall not be deemed to be contrary to the provisions of this Order ; and if the Poor Law Board shall approve of such departure, and shall notify such approval to the guardians, all relief given in such case after such notification, so far as the same shall be in accordance with the terms and conditions of such approval, shall be lawful, anything in this Order to the contrary notwithstanding.

ARTICLE 11. Whenever the word "guardians" is used in this Order it shall be taken to include not only guardians appointed or entitled to act under the provisions of the said herein-before recited Act, but also any governors, directors, managers, acting guardians, vestrymen, or other officers in a parish or union, appointed or entitled to act as managers of the poor, and in the distribution or ordering of the relief of the poor from the Poor Rate, under any general or local Act.

ARTICLE 12. Whenever the word "parish" is used in this Order, it shall be taken to include any place separately maintaining its own poor, whether parochial or extra-parochial.

ARTICLE 13. Whenever in describing any person or party, matter, or thing, the word importing the singular number only is used in this Order, the same shall be taken to include, and shatl be applied to several persons or parties as well as one person or party, and several matters or things as well as one matter or thing respectively, unless there be something in the subject or context repugnant to such construction.

ARTICLE 14. Whenever in this Order any Article is referred to by its number, the Article of this Order bearing that number shall be taken to be signified thereby.

SCHEDULE A.

Containing the names of the Unions to which the above Order applies

Anglesey.	Dulverton.	Lewisham.	Saint Saviour's.
Ashton-under-Lyne.	East London.	Machynlleth.	Salford.
Barnsley.	Ecclesall Bierlow.	Merthyr Tydvil.	Salisbury.
Barton-upon-Irwell.	Edmonton.	Mutford and Lothingland.	Settle.
Bierley, North.	Fulham.	Newcastle-upon-Tyne.	Sheffield.
Blackburn.	Fylde, The.	Northallerton.	Skipton.
Bolton.	Garstang.	Nottingham.	Southampton.
Boughton, Great.	Gateshead.	Norwich	Stepney.
Bradford, in the West Riding of Yorkshire.	Greenwich.	Oldham.	Stockport.
	Hackney.	Pateley Bridge.	Strand.
Brentford.	Halifax.	Penistone.	Sunderland.
Builth.	Haslingden.	Poplar.	Todmorden.
Burnley.	Hemsworth.	Prescot.	Tregaron.
Bury.	Hendon.	Presteigne.	Ulverstone.
Carlisle.	Holborn.	Preston.	Wakefield.
Chichester.	Huddersfield.	Prestwich.	Wandsworth and Clapham.
City of London.	Keighley.	Radford.	
Chorley.	Kendal.	Rhayader.	Warrington.
Chorlton.	King's Lynn.	Richmond, in the County of Surrey.	West Derby.
Clitheroe.	Kingston-upon-Hull.		West London.
Conway.	Lampeter.	Rochdale.	Whitechapel.
Coventry.	Lancaster.	Rotherham.	Wigan.
Dewsbury.	Leicester.	Runcorn.	Wight, Isle of.
Dolgelly.	Leigh.	Saint Olave's.	Wortley.

SCHEDULE B.

Containing the names of the Parishes to which the above Order applies.

Leeds.	Saint George the Martyr, Southwark.	Saint Martin in the Fields.	Saint Mary, Rotherhithe.
Liverpool.		Saint Mary Abbots, Kensington.	Saint Matthew, Bethnal Green.
Manchester.	Saint Giles, Camberwell.		
Paddington.	Saint John, Hampstead.	Saint Mary, Lambeth.	
Saint George in the East.	Saint Luke, Chelsea.	Saint Mary Magdalen, Bermondsey.	

Given under our Hands and Seal of Office, this Fourteenth day of December, in the year One thousand eight hundred and fifty-two.

John Trollope, President.
S. H. Walpole.
B. Disraeli.
Courtenay, Secretary.

APPENDIX No. 2.

PAPER handed in by Sir *Hugh Owen*, K.C.B., 20 February 1895.

To the Guardians of the Poor of the several Unions named in the Schedule hereunto annexed;—

To the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor of the several Parishes and Places comprised within the said respective Unions;—

To the Clerk or Clerks to the Justices of the Petty Sessions held for the Division or Divisions in which the Parishes and Places comprised within the said respective Unions are situate;—

And to all others whom it may concern.

We, the Poor Law Commissioners, in pursuance of the authorities vested in Us by an Act passed in the fifth year of the reign of his late Majesty King William the Fourth, intituled "*An Act for the Amendment and better Administration of the Laws relating to the Poor in England and Wales*," do hereby rescind an Order, being a General Rule of the Poor Law Commissioners, bearing date the Second day of August, in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and forty-one, except so far as the same rescinds any Order or Orders theretofore issued by the Poor Law Commissioners.

And We do hereby also rescind the Orders relative to the relief of able-bodied poor persons, issued by the Poor Law Commissioners to the several Unions hereunder mentioned, except so far as the same rescind any Order or Orders theretofore issued by the said Commissioners, or relate to the Out-door Labour Test for able-bodied Male Paupers; that is to say:—

The Order bearing date the Ninth day of December One thousand eight hundred and forty-one, and issued to the Guardians of the Poor of the Borough of Bury St. Edmunds;

The Order bearing date the Tenth day of January One thousand eight hundred and forty-two, and issued to the Guardians of the Poor of the Aberystwith Union;

The Order bearing date the Fifteenth day of April One thousand eight hundred and forty-two, and issued to the Guardians of the Poor of the Ruthin Union;

The Order bearing date the Thirtieth day of April One thousand eight hundred and forty-two, and issued to the Guardians of the Poor of the Llanfyllin Union;

The General Order bearing date the Thirtieth day of July One Thousand eight hundred and forty-two, and issued to the Guardians of the Poor of the Longtown Union, the Guardians of the Poor of the Whitehaven Union, and the Guardians of the Poor of the Wigton Union;

The Order bearing date the Fifth day of August One thousand eight hundred and forty-two, and issued to the Guardians of the Poor of the Cockermouth Union;

The Order bearing date the Ninth day of September One thousand eight hundred and forty-two, and issued to the Guardians of the Poor of the Richmond Union, in the county of York;

The Order bearing date the Thirtieth day of November One thousand eight hundred and forty-two, and issued to the Guardians of the Poor of the Ormskirk Union;

The Order bearing date the Seventeenth day of December One thousand eight hundred and forty-two, and issued to the Guardians of the Poor of the Hailsham Union;

The Order bearing date the Twenty-first day of January One thousand eight hundred and forty-three, and issued to the Guardians of the Poor of the Chard Union;

And the General Order bearing date the Twenty-seventh day of June One thousand eight hundred and forty-three, and issued to the Guardians of the Poor of St. Asaph Union; the Guardians of the Poor of the Bala Union; the Guardians of the Poor of the Bridgend and Cowbridge Union; the Guardians of the Poor of the Corwen Union; the Guardians of the Poor of the Festiniog Union; and the Guardians of the Poor of the Pwllheli Union:

Provided that nothing herein contained shall apply to any relief given under or prohibited by any of the said Orders hereby rescinded.

And we do hereby order, direct and declare, with respect to each and every of the Unions named in the Schedule hereunto annexed, as follows:—

ARTICLE I.—Every able-bodied person, male or female, requiring relief from any Parish within any of the said Unions, shall be relieved wholly in the Workhouse of the Union, together with such of the family of every such able-bodied person as may be resident with him or her, and may not be in employment, and together with the wife of every such able-bodied male person, if he be a married man, and if she be resident with him; save and except in the following places:—

1st.—Where such person shall require relief on account of sudden and urgent necessity.

2nd.—Where such persons shall require relief on account of any sickness, accident, or bodily or mental infirmity affecting such person, or any of his or her family.

3rd.—Where such person shall require relief for the purpose of defraying the expenses, either wholly or in part, of the burial of any of his or her family.

4th.—Where such person, being a widow, shall be in the first six months of her widowhood.

5th.—Where such person shall be a widow, and have a legitimate child or legitimate children dependent upon her, and incapable of earning his, her, or their livelihood, and have no illegitimate child born after the commencement of her widowhood.

6th.—Where such person shall be confined in any gaol or place of safe custody, subject always to the regulation contained in Article IV.

7th.—Where such person shall be the wife, or child, of any able-bodied man who shall be in the service of Her Majesty as a soldier, sailor, or marine.

8th.—Where any able-bodied person, not being a soldier, sailor, or marine, shall not reside within the Union, but the wife, child, or children of such person shall reside within the same, the Board of Guardians of the Union, according to their discretion, may, subject to the regulation contained in Article IV., afford relief in the workhouse to such wife, child, or children, or may allow out-door relief for any such child or children being within the age of nurture, and resident with the mother within the union.

Article II.—In every case in which out-door relief shall be given on account of sickness, accident, or infirmity, to any able-bodied male person resident within any of the said unions, or to any member of the family of any able-bodied male person, an extract from the medical officer's weekly report (if any such officer shall have attended the case), stating the nature of such sickness, accident, or infirmity, shall be specially entered in the minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Guardians of the day on which the relief is ordered or subsequently allowed.

But if the Board of Guardians shall think fit, a certificate under the hand of a medical officer of the union, or of the medical practitioner in attendance on the party, shall be laid before the Board, stating the nature of such sickness, accident, or infirmity, and a copy of the same shall be in like manner entered in the minutes.

Article III.—No relief shall be given from the poor-rates of any parish comprised in any of the said unions to any person who does not reside in some place within the union, save and except in the following cases :—

1st.—Where such person, being casually within such parish, shall become destitute.

2nd.—Where such person shall require relief on account of any sickness, accident, or bodily or mental infirmity affecting such person, or any of his or her family.

3rd.—Where such person shall be entitled to receive relief from any parish in which he or she may not be resident, under any order which justices may by law be authorised to make.

4th.—Where such person, being a widow, shall be in the first six months of her widowhood.

5th.—Where such person is a widow, who has a legitimate child dependent on her for support, and no illegitimate child born after the commencement of her widowhood, and who at the time of her husband's death was resident with him in some place other than the parish of her legal settlement, and not situated in the union in which such parish may be comprised.

6th.—Where such person shall be a child under the age of sixteen, maintained in a workhouse or establishment for the education of pauper children not situate within the union.

7th.—Where such person shall be the wife or child residing within the union, of some person not able-bodied, and not residing within the union.

8th.—Where such person shall have been in the receipt of relief from some parish in the union from which such person seeks relief, at some time within the twelve calendar months next preceding the date of that one of the several Orders hereinbefore recited which was applicable to that union, being settled in such parish and not being resident within the union at the time of the allowance of the relief.

Article IV.—Where the husband of any woman is beyond the seas, or in custody of the law, or in confinement in a licensed house or asylum as a lunatic or idiot, all relief which the Guardians shall give to his wife, or her child or children, shall be given to such woman, in the same manner, and subject to the same conditions, as if she were a widow.

Article V.—It shall not be lawful for the Guardians, or any of their Officers, or for the overseer or overseers of any parish in the union, to pay, wholly or in part, the rent of the house or lodging of any pauper, or to apply any portion of the relief ordered to be given to any pauper in payment of any such rent, or to retain any portion of such relief for the purpose of directly or indirectly discharging such rent in full or in part, for any such pauper.

Provided always, that nothing in this Article contained shall apply to any shelter or temporary lodging, procured in any case of sudden and urgent necessity, or mental imbecility, or shall be taken to prevent the said Guardians, in regulating the amount of relief to be afforded to any particular person, from considering the expense to be incurred by such person in providing lodging.

Article VI.—Provided always, that in case the Guardians of any of the said unions depart in any particular instance from any of the regulations hereinbefore contained, and within fifteen days after such departure report the same, and the grounds thereof, to the Poor Law Commissioners, and the Poor Law Commissioners approve of such departure, then the relief granted in such particular instance shall, if otherwise lawful, not be deemed to be unlawful, or be subject to be disallowed.

Article VII.—No relief which may be contrary to any regulation in this Order shall be given by way of loan ; and any relief which may be given to, or on account of, any person above the age of twenty-one, or to his wife, or any part of his or her family under the age of sixteen, under Article I., or any of the exceptions thereto, or under any of the exceptions to Article III., or under Article IV., or under the proviso in Article VI., may, if the Guardians think fit, be given by way of loan.

Article VIII.—Whenever the word "Parish" is used in this Order, it shall be taken to include any place separately maintaining its own poor, whether parochial or extra-parochial.

Article IX.—Whenever the word "Union" is used in this Order, it shall be taken to include not only an union of parishes formed under the provisions of the hereinbefore recited Act, but also any union of parishes incorporated or united for the relief or maintenance of the poor under any local Act of Parliament.

Article X.—Whenever the word "Guardians" is used in this Order, it shall be taken to include not only Guardians appointed, or entitled to act, under the provisions of the said hereinbefore recited Act, but also any governors, directors, managers, or acting guardians entitled to act in the ordering of relief to the poor from the poor-rates under any local Act of Parliament.

Article XI.—Whenever in this Order any Article is referred to by its number, the article of this Order bearing that number shall be taken to be signified thereby.

SCHEDULE

Containing the Names of the Unions to which the present Order applies.

Aberaeron
Abergavenny
Aberystwith
Abingdon
Albans, St.
Alcester
Alderbury
Alnwick
Alresford
Alton
Altrincham
Amersham
Amesbury
Ampthill
Andover
Asaph, St.
Ashby-de-la-Zouch
Ashford, East
Ashford, West
Aston
Atcham
Atherstone
Auckland
Austell, St.
Axbridge
Axminster
Aylesbury
Aylesford, North
Aylsham

Bakewell
Bala
Banbury
Barnet
Barnstaple
Barrow-upon-Soar
Basford
Basingstoke
Bath
Battle
Beaminster
Bedale
Bedford
Bedminster
Belford
Belper
Bellingham
Berkhampstead
Berwick-upon-Tweed
Beverley
Bicester
Bideford
Biggleswade
Billericay
Billesdon
Bingham
Bishops Stortford
Blaby
Blandford
Blean
Blofield
Blything
Bosmere and Claydon
Boston
Bourn
Brackley
Bradfield
Bradford (Wilts)
Braintree
Brampton
Brecknock
Bridge
Bridgend and Cowbridge

Bridgenorth
Bridgwater
Bridport
Brixworth
Bromley
Bromsgrove
Bromyard
Buckingham
Buntingford
Burton-upon-Trent
Bury Saint Edmunds

Caistor
Calne
Cambridge
Cardiff
Cardigan
Carmarthen
Castle Ward
Catherington
Caxton and Arrington
Cerne
Chailey
Chapel-en-le-Frith
Chard
Cheadle
Chelmsford
Cheltenham
Chepstow
Chesterfield
Chesterton
Chester-le-Street
Chippenham
Chipping Norton
Chipping Sodbury
Christchurch
Church Stretton
Cirencester
Cleobury Mortimer
Clifton
Clun
Clutton
Cockermouth
Colchester
Columb Major, St.
Cookham
Corwen
Cosford
Cranbrook
Crediton
Crickhowel
Cricklade and Wootton Bassett
Croydon
Cuckfield

Darlington
Dartford
Daventry
Depwade
Derby
Devizes
Docking
Doncaster
Dorchester
Dore

Dorking
Dover
Downham
Drayton
Driffield
Droitwich
Droxford
Dudley
Dunmow
Durham
Dursley

Easingwold
Eastbourne
East Grinstead
Easthampstead
East Retford
East Ward.
Eastry
Elham
Ellesmere
Ely
Epping
Epsom
Erpingham
Eton
Evesham

Faith, St.
Fareham
Faringdon
Faversham
Festiniog
Flegg, East and West
Foleshill
Fordingbridge
Forehoe
Freebridge Lynn
Frome

Gainsborough
Germans, St.
Glandford Brigg
Glendale
Glossop
Gloucester
Godstone
Goole
Grantham
Gravesend and Milton
Guildford
Guiltcross
Guisborough

Hailsham
Halstead
Haltwhistle
Hambledon
Hardingstone
Hartismere
Hartley Witney
Hastings
Havant
Haverfordwest
Hay
Hayfield
Headington
Hemel Hempstead
Henley
Henstead
Hereford
Hertford
Hexham
Highworth and Swindon
Hinckley
Hitchin
Holbeach
Hollingbourn
Holywell
Honiton
Hoo
Horncastle
Horsham
Houghton-le-Spring
Howden
Hoxne
Hungerford
Huntingdon
Hursley

Ipswich
Ives, St.

Kettering
Keynsham
Kidderminster
Kingsbridge
Kingsclere
King's Norton
Kington
Knighton

Lanchester
Langport
Launceston
Ledbury
Leek
Leighton Buzzard
Leominster
Lewes
Lexden and Winstree

Leyburn
Lichfield
Lincoln
Linton
Liskeard
Llandilo Fawr
Llandovery
Llanelly
Llanfyllin
Loddon and Clavering
Longtown
Loughborough
Louth
Ludlow
Luton
Lutterworth
Lymington

Madeley
Maidstone
Maldon
Malling
Malmsbury
Malton
Mansfield
Market Bosworth
Market Harborough
Marlborough
Martley
Medway
Melksham
Melton Mowbray
Mere
Meriden
Midhurst
Mildenhall
Milton
Mitford and Launditch
Monmouth
Morpeth

Nantwich
Narbeth
Neath
Neot's, St.
Newark
Newbury
Newcastle-in-Emlyn
Newcastle-under-Lyne
Newent
New Forest
Newhaven
Newmarket
Newport (Monmouth)
Newport (Salop)
Newport Pagnell
Newton Abbott
Northampton
Northleach
Northwich
North Witchford
Nuneaton

Oakham
Okehampton
Ongar
Ormskirk
Orsett
Oundle

Patrington
Pembroke
Penkridge
Penrith
Penzance
Pershore
Peterborough
Petersfield
Petworth
Pewsey
Pickering
Plomesgate
Plympton St. Mary
Pont-y-Pool
Poole
Portsea Island
Potterspury
Pwllhelli

Reading
Redruth
Reeth
Reigate
Richmond (Yorkshire)
Ringwood
Risbridge
Rochford
Romford
Romney Marsh
Romsey
Ross
Rothbury
Royston
Rugby
Ruthin
Rye

Saffron Walden
Samford
Scarborough
Sculcoates
Sedgefield
Seisdon
Selby
Sevenoaks
Shaftesbury
Shardlow
Sheppy
Shepton Mallet
Sherborne
Shiffnal
Shipston-upon-Stour
Skirlaugh
Sleaford
Solihull
Southam
South Molton
South Shields
South Stoneham
Southwell
Spalding
Spilsby
Stafford
Staines
Stamford
Steyning
Stockbridge
Stone
Stourbridge
Stow
Stow-on-the-Wold
Stratford-upon-Avon
Stroud
Sturminster
Sudbury
Swaffham
Swansea

Tamworth
Taunton
Tavistock
Teesdale
Tenbury
Tendring
Tenterden
Tetbury
Tewkesbury
Thakeham
Thame
Thanet, Isle of
Thetford
Thingoe
Thirsk
Thomas, St.
Thornbury
Thorne
Thrapston
Ticehurst
Tisbury
Tiverton
Tonbridge
Torrington
Totnes
Towcester
Tunstead and Happing
Tynemouth

Uckfield
Uppingham
Upton-upon-Severn
Uttoxeter
Uxbridge

Wallingford
Walsall
Walsingham
Wangford
Wantage
Ware
Wareham and Purbeck
Warminster
Warwick
Watford
Wayland
Weardale
Wellingborough
Wellington (Somerset)
Wellington (Salop)
Wells
Welwyn
Wem
Weobly
Westbourne
West Bromwich
Westbury-upon-Severn
Westbury and Whorwelsdown
West Firle
West Ham
West Hampnett
West Ward
Weymouth
Wheatenhurst
Whitby
Whitchurch
Whitehaven
Wigtown
Williton
Wilton
Wimborne and Cranborne
Wincanton
Winchcombe
Winchester, New
Windsor
Winslow
Wirrall
Wisbeach
Witham
Witney
Woburn
Wokingham
Wolverhampton
Woodbridge
Woodstock
Wolstanton and Burslem
Worcester
Worksop
Wrexham
Wycombe

Yeovil

Given under our Hands and Seal of Office, this Twenty-first day of December, in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and forty-four.

(Signed)

L. S.

Geo. Nicholls.
G. C. Lewis.
Edmund W. Head.

APPENDIX No. 3.

PAPER handed in by Sir *Hugh Owen*, K.C.B., 20 February 1895.

The following Table shows the number of persons relieved on the corresponding days of January during the last thirty-nine Years, together with the population of the country, as estimated in the Registrar General's Annual Reports and Quarterly Returns, and the number of Paupers in every 1,000 of the population on the last day of the fifth week of the month in each Year.

TABLE I.—ENGLAND AND WALES.

YEAR.	Estimated Population. *	1st Week of January.	2nd Week of January.	3rd Week of January.	4th Week of January.	5th Week of January.	Number of Paupers in every 1,000 Inhabitants, in the 5th Week.
1857	19,042,412	881,795	890,432	900,455	906,510	920,608	48·3
1858	19,256,516	938,468	955,821	965,890	973,818	976,773	50·7
1859	19,471,291	854,495	859,895	866,130	870,320	872,459	44·8
1860	19,876,701	826,165	828,191	829,997	831,285	832,362	42·3
1861	19,902,713	860,538	905,747	948,379	946,661	919,999	46·2
1862	20,119,314	902,133	914,886	923,444	940,476	945,888	47·0
1863	20,371,013	1,098,598	1,096,157	1,099,440	1,102,144	1,098,161	53·9
1864	20,625,855	961,543	979,815	1,000,017	1,004,773	999,400	48·4
1865	20,883,889	927,122	932,622	938,465	943,880	951,787	45·6
1866	21,145,151	874,287	880,577	890,216	897,092	900,133	42·6
1867	21,409,684	922,702	947,942	1,004,363	1,053,920	1,023,551	47·8
1868	21,677,525	991,989	1,019,522	1,034,203	1,038,375	1,042,041	48·1
1869	21,948,713	991,537	1,000,839	1,010,177	1,014,678	1,020,977	46·5
1870	22,223,299	1,025,893	1,033,275	1,043,059	1,048,458	1,054,885	47·5
1871	22,501,316	1,014,803	1,044,363	1,066,780	1,069,325	1,066,105	47·4
1872	22,788,594	927,138	925,803	930,658	934,838	937,444	41·1
1873	23,096,495	836,312	838,682	843,025	845,211	848,646	36·7
1874	23,408,556	778,957	781,266	785,812	788,534	790,314	33·8
1875	23,724,834	757,512	762,900	764,830	763,847	765,408	32·3
1876	24,045,385	698,210	697,138	702,470	705,457	706,671	29·4
1877	24,370,267	674,484	675,283	680,924	684,331	686,670	28·2
1878	24,699,539	685,567	692,179	697,214	700,604	705,402	28·6
1879	25,033,259	741,745	754,488	769,039	781,560	792,211	31·6
1880	25,371,489	782,359	779,592	781,299	785,625	795,988	31·4
1881	25,714,288	747,033	750,483	759,202	778,084	804,549	31·3
1882	26,046,112	741,213	741,853	746,048	748,904	750,651	28·8
1883	26,334,776	739,766	742,354	745,048	746,671	749,587	28·5
1884	26,626,639	714,959	717,356	720,639	723,278	726,258	27·3
1885	26,921,737	726,103	729,601	737,195	740,836	744,245	27·6
1886	27,220,105	742,999	748,058	759,547	763,483	770,570	28·3
1887	27,521,780	751,882	764,185	776,863	783,403	778,961	28·3
1888	27,826,798	759,466	762,966	769,561	773,896	778,111	28·0
1889	28,135,197	741,967	749,327	752,687	755,955	756,398	26·9
1890	28,447,014	715,587	721,751	725,721	729,050	730,341	25·7
1891	28,762,287	703,951	715,603	720,721	723,824	714,055	24·8
1892	29,081,047	680,866	693,376	702,445	704,452	704,345	24·2
1893	29,403,346	704,760	714,496	719,821	717,467	714,032	24·3
1894	29,731,100	732,863	740,635	742,080	741,318	741,385	24·9
1895	30,060,763	737,886	752,235	764,251	770,436	—	25·6 (4th week.)

* This is the estimated population in the middle of each year preceding the year for which the number of paupers is given.

It will be observed from the foregoing Table that the number of Paupers in receipt of Relief in January 1895 was larger in each of the first four weeks than in ten out of the twenty years from 1874. It was, however, notwithstanding the increase in population, smaller in each of the first four weeks than the number relieved in the corresponding month in any year from 1857 to 1874. The proportion which the Paupers bore to the population of the country in the last week of the month in 1895 was 25·6 to the 1,000, which was smaller than in any other year, except the four immediately preceding it. The proportion was smallest in 1892, when it fell to 24·2 to the 1,000. In each of the sixteen years from 1857 to 1872 it was more than 40 to the 1,000, and in one of those years it reached 53·9 to the 1,000. If the Paupers had borne the same proportion to estimated population in the fourth week of January 1895 as they did in that week in 1865, 1875, and 1885 respectively, the numbers would have been as follows:—

In the same proportion as in 1865 they would have numbered 1,358,643 instead of 770,436.
Ditto - - - 1875 - ditto - - 967,839 - ditto.
Ditto - - - 1885 - ditto - - 827,216 - ditto.

The following Table gives similar information to that in Table I. with respect to the Pauperism of the Metropolis, apart from that of the rest of the country:—

TABLE II.—THE METROPOLIS.

YEAR.	Estimated Population. *	1st Week of January.	2nd Week of January.	3rd Week of January.	4th Week of January.	5th Week of January.	Number of Paupers in every 1,000 Inhabitants, in the 5th Week.
1857	2,591,815	105,373	107,670	111,372	112,595	121,277	46·8
1858	2,636,174	102,682	107,138	108,816	111,497	113,158	42·9
1859	2,680,700	94,200	96,245	97,565	98,445	98,209	36·6
1860	2,725,374	90,643	91,418	91,466	91,473	91,848	33·7
1861	2,770,181	100,204	117,400	130,317	127,008	114,482	41·3
1862	2,815,101	96,371	98,954	100,179	104,001	103,876	36·9
1863	2,860,117	99,725	101,063	102,554	104,006	103,684	36·3
1864	2,905,210	96,309	102,022	107,219	106,214	104,073	35·8
1865	2,950,361	98,472	100,756	102,363	103,203	105,474	35·7
1866	2,995,551	101,116	103,332	106,719	107,362	107,374	35·8
1867	3,040,761	133,607	144,665	167,713	185,216	168,899	55·5
1868	3,085,971	155,343	166,764	169,145	166,829	165,067	53·5
1869	3,131,160	145,306	149,159	150,072	151,676	154,067	49·2
1870	3,176,308	154,560	156,854	160,366	162,680	166,002	52·3
1871	3,221,394	150,376	160,655	164,063	162,422	162,425	50·4
1872	3,267,251	122,647	122,536	123,852	124,470	125,175	38·3
1873	3,319,736	109,851	110,334	111,690	111,765	112,767	34·0
1874	3,373,065	105,795	105,530	106,908	107,425	107,669	31·9
1875	3,427,250	98,020	99,537	99,916	99,649	99,524	29·0
1876	3,482,306	86,711	87,413	88,987	89,149	88,923	25·5
1877	3,538,246	82,956	83,733	84,909	85,562	86,105	24·3
1878	3,595,085	82,507	82,928	84,604	85,471	86,136	24·0
1879	3,652,837	84,144	85,304	87,391	88,663	90,844	24·9
1880	3,711,517	92,482	92,895	93,627	95,676	98,993	26·7
1881	3,771,139	92,598	93,822	96,564	101,071	105,624	28·0
1882	3,824,964	94,351	94,906	96,541	96,531	98,174	25·7
1883	3,862,876	96,473	97,853	98,124	98,884	98,841	25·6
1884	3,901,164	92,600	93,257	93,476	94,540	94,754	24·3
1885	3,939,832	94,296	95,338	96,603	97,744	97,945	24·9
1886	3,978,883	94,952	96,228	98,030	99,266	100,597	25·3
1887	4,018,321	98,648	101,114	103,971	105,001	105,199	26·2
1888	4,058,150	104,145	104,618	106,969	108,783	109,152	26·9
1889	4,098,374	101,647	103,685	104,012	104,734	104,880	25·6
1890	4,138,996	99,579	102,131	103,858	103,845	103,033	24·9
1891	4,180,021	99,382	102,240	103,509	103,989	100,577	24·1
1892	4,221,452	97,153	99,947	100,900	100,455	99,363	23·5
1893	4,263,294	102,805	103,725	104,203	103,275	101,866	23·9
1894	4,306,411	107,878	109,516	108,167	107,751	107,557	25·0
1895	4,369,166	106,621	112,935	114,760	117,336	125,435	28·8

* This is the estimated population in the middle of each year preceding the year for which the number of paupers is given.

The foregoing figures show that in only five of the thirty-eight preceding years have the persons relieved in the Metropolis in each week of the month of January exceeded the number relieved in that month in the present year. Moreover, the proportion of Pauperism to population was larger in 1895 than in any one of the nineteen years since 1875. It was highest in the years from 1867 to 1871, in which it ranged from 49 to 55 to the 1,000, as compared with 23·5 to the 1,000 in 1892, when it was lowest, and 28·8 to the 1,000 in 1895.

If the Paupers had borne the same proportion to estimated population in the last week of January 1895 as they did in that week in 1865, 1875, and 1885 respectively, the numbers would have been as follows:—

In the same proportion as in 1865 they would have numbered 155,481 instead of 125,435.

Ditto - - 1875 - - ditto - 126,296 - ditto.

Ditto - - - 1885 - - ditto - - 108,121 - ditto.

TABLE II.—THE METROPOLIS—*continued.*

The following Table gives information with respect to the Pauperism of the Metropolis, apart from that of the rest of the country :—

YEAR.	Estimated Population. *	1st Week of February.	2nd Week of February.	3rd Week of February.	4th Week of February.	Number of Paupers in every 1,000 Inhabitants, in the 4th Week.
1857	2,591,815	141,529	137,594	127,489	120,345	46·4
1858	2,636,174	114,728	115,554	114,786	116,695	44·3
1859	2,680,700	98,181	98,424	97,831	97,328	36·3
1860	2,725,374	91,697	91,923	93,061	92,635	34·0
1861	2,770,181	105,004	103,632	101,915	99,795	36·0
1862	2,815,101	102,248	102,593	102,641	102,462	36·4
1863	2,860,117	103,499	102,580	102,133	101,712	35·6
1864	2,905,210	103,595	105,043	106,092	107,918	37·1
1865	2,950,361	107,535	107,031	111,050	116,329	39·4
1866	2,995,551	107,261	107,325	107,552	107,911	36·0
1867	3,040,761	157,911	148,689	144,002	141,756	46·6
1868	3,085,971	163,760	161,466	159,297	156,650	50·8
1869	3,131,160	155,101	152,759	151,689	150,819	48·2
1870	3,176,308	168,091	169,093	180,284	181,001	57·1
1871	3,221,394	164,340	160,207	157,233	153,629	47·7
1872	3,267,251	124,756	123,764	122,897	121,974	37·3
1873	3,319,736	114,420	117,402	118,778	119,509	36·0
1874	3,373,065	107,301	107,311	108,545	108,838	32·3
1875	3,427,250	99,217	98,464	98,351	98,326	28·7
1876	3,482,306	88,540	88,929	89,056	88,423	25·4
1877	3,538,246	86,185	85,742	85,895	85,649	24·2
1878	3,595,085	86,716	86,616	86,853	86,313	24·0
1879	3,652,837	92,785	92,214	90,604	89,778	24·6
1880	3,711,517	101,102	98,713	96,903	95,769	25·8
1881	3,771,139	104,764	102,380	101,154	100,283	26·6
1882	3,824,964	98,150	99,565	98,135	98,462	25·7
1883	3,862,876	99,665	99,135	99,377	98,354	25·5
1884	3,901,164	95,039	94,503	94,758	94,365	24·2
1885	3,939,832	97,779	97,434	97,164	96,978	24·6
1886	3,978,883	100,517	102,050	103,297	103,795	26·1
1887	4,018,321	104,233	104,560	104,562	104,731	26·1
1888	4,058,150	110,319	110,220	110,458	111,837	27·6
1889	4,098,374	105,730	107,056	106,284	106,583	26·0
1890	4,138,996	102,359	101,785	101,136	100,508	24·3
1891	4,180,021	97,979	96,495	95,961	95,529	22·9
1892	4,221,452	98,207	98,458	97,571	98,042	23·2
1893	4,263,294	101,863	101,235	101,590	100,671	23·6
1894	4,306,411	106,736	106,493	106,381	104,783	24·3
1895	4,349,166	134,082	—	—	—	30·8 (1st week)

* This is the estimated population in the middle of each year preceding the year for which the number of paupers is given.

TABLE III.—METROPOLITAN PAUPERISM.

NUMBER of PAUPERS (exclusive of Lunatics in Asylums and Vagrants) on the Last Day

Population, 1891.	UNIONS.	PAUPERS.				
		IN-DOOR.	OUT-DOOR.		TOTAL.	
		Adults and Children.	Adults.	Children (under 16).	5th Week of January 1895.	
	WEST DISTRICT:					
166,308	Kensington	2,517	260	98	2,875	1
188,878	Fulham	2,126	667	531	3,324	2
117,846	Paddington	1,043	116	110	1,269	3
96,253	Chelsea	1,836	283	69	2,188	4
134,138	St. George's	2,958	347	184	3,489	5
37,312	Westminster	894	81	17	992	6
740,735	Total of the West District	11,374	1,754	1,009	14,137	7
	NORTH DISTRICT:					
142,404	St. Marylebone	3,522	211	134	3,867	8
68,416	Hampstead	425	123	60	608	9
234,379	St. Pancras	4,799	1,416	1,025	7,240	10
319,143	Islington	3,038	2,451	1,615	7,104	11
229,542	Hackney	2,768	2,296	1,810	6,874	12
993,884	Total of the North District	14,552	6,497	4,644	25,693	13
	CENTRAL DISTRICT:					
39,782	St. Giles and St. George	1,076	225	229	1,530	14
27,516	Strand	1,534	294	201	2,029	15
141,920	Holborn	4,002	1,077	816	5,895	16
38,320	City of London	1,403	803	134	2,340	17
247,538	Total of Central District	8,015	2,399	1,380	11,794	18
	EAST DISTRICT:					
124,009	Shoreditch	2,029	479	391	2,899	19
129,132	Bethnal Green	3,032	967	406	4,405	20
74,462	Whitechapel	1,749	7	25	1,781	21
45,795	St. George-in-the-East	1,158	11	9	1,178	22
57,376	Stepney	1,386	25	15	1,426	23
107,592	Mile End Old Town	1,671	478	411	2,560	24
166,748	Poplar	3,058	1,397	447	4,902	25
705,114	Total of the East District	14,083	3,364	1,704	19,151	26
	SOUTH DISTRICT:					
202,693	St. Saviour's	4,527	1,206	628	6,361	27
136,660	St. Olave's	2,427	4,754	3,273	10,454	28
275,203	Lambeth	3,642	2,267	1,265	7,174	29
307,500	Wandsworth and Clapham	2,715	2,091	1,669	6,475	30
235,344	Camberwell	2,917	3,572	4,062	10,551	31
165,413	Greenwich	3,053	2,063	1,532	6,648	32
107,324	Woolwich	1,496	949	477	2,922	33
94,335	Lewisham	1,139	1,382	1,554	4,075	34
1,524,472	Total of the South District	21,916	18,284	14,460	54,660	35
4,211,743	TOTAL OF THE METROPOLIS	* 69,940	32,298	23,197	* 125,435	36
	4th Week of January	68,925	29,232	19,179	117,336	37

* Excluding patients in the Fever and Small-pox
The number of these patients on the last day of the week was returned

TOTAL PAUPERISM

	Population
5th week of January 1895	1
5th week of January 1894	2
5th week of January 1893	3
5th week of January 1892	4

Local Government Board,
13 February 1895.

VAGRANTS relieved in the Metropolis on the last day

Men.	Women.
956	168

TABLE III.—METROPOLITAN PAUPERISM.

of the 5th Week of January 1895, and "Total" of corresponding Week in 1894.

	Corresponding "Total" in 1894.	Number of Vagrants Relieved on the Last Day of the 5th Week of January 1895.				Number of Patients in Fever and Small-pox Hospitals.	Number of Children Boarded Out beyond the limits of the Union or Parish.	Difference between 1894 and 1895.	
		Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.			Increase.	Decrease.
1	2,559	35	9	—	44	62	—	316	—
2	2,822	25	1	—	26	147	—	502	—
3	1,344	43	13	—	56	37	59	—	75
4	2,184	2	3	—	5	54	15	4	—
5	3,287	38	9	1	48	69	86	202	—
6	1,030	—	—	—	—	27	—	—	38
7	13,226	143	35	1	179	396	160	911	—
8	3,124	65	13	3	81	108	31	143	—
9	596	5	5	—	10	24	12	12	—
10	6,896	20	5	—	25	177	150	344	—
11	6,936	13	1	—	14	114	95	168	—
12	5,932	26	6	1	33	62	9	942	—
13	24,084	129	30	4	163	485	297	1,609	—
14	1,432	49	15	—	64	10	—	98	—
15	1,972	86	15	—	101	3	—	57	—
16	5,696	40	15	—	55	52	108	199	—
17	2,432	29	—	—	29	11	30	—	92
18	11,532	204	45	—	249	76	138	262	—
19	2,885	18	4	—	22	59	5	14	—
20	4,092	—	—	—	—	62	20	313	—
21	1,626	53	7	—	60	58	23	155	—
22	1,220	115	5	—	120	31	—	—	42
23	1,332	50	—	—	50	42	—	94	—
24	2,637	21	6	—	27	48	—	—	77
25	4,926	—	—	—	—	80	85	—	24
26	18,718	257	22	—	279	380	133	433	—
27	5,585	54	14	—	68	117	70	776	—
28	5,204	26	2	—	28	138	—	5,250	—
29	6,581	7	6	—	13	99	58	593	—
30	5,830	54	3	—	57	255	87	645	—
31	6,651	34	5	—	39	135	7	3,900	—
32	4,435	19	—	—	19	150	—	2,213	—
33	2,421	13	4	—	17	97	17	501	—
34	3,290	16	2	—	18	30	—	785	—
35	39,997	223	36	—	259	1,021	239	14,663	—
36	* 107,557	956	168	5	1,129	2,358	967	17,878	—
37	107,751	1,004	224	8	1,236	2,354	969	—	—

Hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums Board.
as 2,358 in 1895, 2,959 in 1894, 2,981 in 1893, and 1,544 in 1892.

OF METROPOLIS.

in 1891, 4,211,743.

	NUMBER OF PAUPERS.		
	In-Door.	Out-Door.	Total.
1	69,940	55,495	* 125,435
2	66,768	40,789	* 107,557
3	63,496	38,370	* 101,866
4	61,487	37,876	* 99,363

Frederick Stevens,
Statistical Department.

of the 5th week of January 1895.

Children under 16.	Total.
5	1,129

TABLE III.—METROPOLITAN PAUPERISM—*continued.*

NUMBER OF PAUPERS (exclusive of Lunatics in Asylums and Vagrants) on the Last Day

UNIONS.	PAUPERS.				
	IN-DOOR.	OUT-DOOR.		TOTAL.	
	Adults and Children.	Adults.	Children (under 16).	1st Week of February 1895.	
WEST DISTRICT:					
Kensington	2,551	266	101	2,918	1
Fulham	2,152	883	857	3,892	2
Paddington	1,057	131	117	1,305	3
Chelsea	1,849	300	107	2,256	4
St. George's	3,019	370	214	3,603	5
Westminster	917	81	17	1,015	6
Total of the West District	11,545	2,031	1,413	14,989	7
NORTH DISTRICT:					
St. Marylebone	3,554	232	152	3,938	8
Hampstead	433	133	62	628	9
St. Pancras	4,861	1,971	1,612	8,444	10
Islington	3,043	2,509	1,659	7,211	11
Hackney	2,786	2,725	2,353	7,864	12
Total of the North District	14,677	7,570	5,838	28,085	13
CENTRAL DISTRICT:					
St. Giles and St. George	1,094	240	241	1,575	14
Strand	1,556	296	219	2,071	15
Holborn	4,033	1,096	824	5,953	16
City of London	1,434	806	140	2,380	17
Total of Central District	8,117	2,438	1,424	11,979	18
EAST DISTRICT:					
Shoreditch	2,040	492	416	2,948	19
Bethnal Green	3,061	981	490	4,532	20
Whitechapel	1,765	4	25	1,794	21
St. George-in-the-East	1,179	16	14	1,209	22
Stepney	1,409	39	13	1,461	23
Mile End Old Town	1,670	498	424	2,592	24
Poplar	3,087	1,431	453	4,971	25
Total of the East District	14,211	3,461	1,835	19,507	26
SOUTH DISTRICT:					
St. Saviour's	4,613	1,368	869	6,850	27
St. Olave's	2,421	6,195	3,738	12,354	28
Lambeth	3,677	2,306	1,332	7,315	29
Wandsworth and Clapham	2,643	2,223	1,863	6,729	30
Camberwell	2,937	3,785	4,606	11,328	31
Greenwich	3,094	2,339	1,869	7,302	32
Woolwich	1,494	993	498	2,985	33
Lewisham	1,153	1,608	1,898	4,659	34
Total of the South District	22,032	20,817	16,673	59,522	35
TOTAL of the Metropolis	70,582	36,317	27,183	*134,082	36
5th week of January	69,940	32,298	23,197	125,435	37

* Excluding patients in the Fever and Small-pox
The number of these patients on the last day of the week was returned

TOTAL PAUPERISM

	Population	
1st week of February 1895		1
1st week of February 1894		2
1st week of February 1893		3
1st week of February 1892		4

Local Government Board,
20 February 1895.

VAGRANTS relieved in the Metropolis on the last day

Men.	Women.
1,000	193.

TABLE III.—METROPOLITAN PAUPERISM—*continued.*

of the 1st Week of February 1895, and "Total" of corresponding Week in 1894.

	Corresponding "Total" in 1894.	Number of Vagrants relieved on the Last Day of the 1st Week of February 1895.				Number of Patients in Fever and Small-pox Hospitals.	Number of Children Boarded out beyond the limits of the Union or Parish.	Difference between 1895 and 1894.		Increase or Decrease per cent. in 1895, as compared with 1894.	
		Men.	Women.	Children.	TOTAL.			Increase.	Decrease.	Increase.	Decrease.
1	2,523	36	12	–	48	53	–	395	–	15·7	–
2	2,850	30	4	–	34	150	–	1,042	–	36·6	–
3	1,310	43	12	–	55	38	59	–	5	–	0·4
4	2,230	–	4	–	4	57	15	26	–	1·2	–
5	3,259	37	14	–	51	70	86	344	–	10·6	–
6	1,039	–	–	–	–	25	–	–	24	–	2·3
7	13,211	146	46	–	192	393	160	1,778	–	13·5	–
8	3,716	66	19	–	85	109	31	222	–	6·0	–
9	598	5	2	–	7	24	12	30	–	5·0	–
10	6,792	10	5	–	15	170	150	1,652	–	24·3	–
11	6,840	39	–	–	39	146	95	371	–	5·4	–
12	5,931	26	13	3	42	58	9	1,933	–	32·6	–
13	23,877	146	39	3	188	507	297	4,208	–	17·6	–
14	1,421	35	8	–	43	9	–	151	–	10·6	–
15	1,981	74	12	2	88	4	–	90	–	4·5	–
16	5,634	47	18	1	66	60	108	319	–	5·7	–
17	2,403	35	7	1	43	13	30	–	23	–	1·0
18	11,442	191	45	4	240	86	138	537	–	4·7	–
19	2,781	30	6	–	36	61	5	167	–	6·0	–
20	4,033	–	–	–	–	58	20	499	–	12·4	–
21	1,584	55	12	–	67	50	23	210	–	13·3	–
22	1,218	150	11	–	161	31	–	–	9	–	0·7
23	1,318	48	–	–	48	48	–	113	–	8·4	–
24	2,619	22	2	–	24	71	–	–	27	–	1·0
25	4,873	–	–	–	–	79	85	98	–	2·0	–
26	18,456	305	31	–	336	398	133	1,051	–	5·7	–
27	5,601	54	13	1	68	97	70	1,249	–	22·3	–
28	5,187	23	1	–	24	137	–	7,167	–	138·2	–
29	6,603	8	5	–	13	99	58	712	–	10·8	–
30	5,864	45	1	–	46	241	87	865	–	14·8	–
31	6,462	33	8	–	41	140	7	4,866	–	75·3	–
32	4,385	21	2	–	23	146	–	2,917	–	66·5	–
33	2,418	13	1	–	14	98	17	567	–	23·4	–
34	3,230	15	1	–	16	28	–	1,429	–	44·2	–
35	39,750	212	32	1	245	986	239	19,772	–	49·7	–
36	*106,736	1,000	193	8	1,201	2,370	967	27,346	–	25·6	–
37	107,557	956	168	5	1,129	2,358	967	–	–	–	–

Hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums Board.
as 2,370 in 1895, 2,902 in 1894, 2,920 in 1893, and 1,491 in 1892.

OF METROPOLIS.

in 1891, 4,211,056

	NUMBER OF PAUPERS.		
	IN-DOOR.	OUT-DOOR.	TOTAL.
1	70,582	63,500	* 134,082
2	66,557	40,179	* 106,736
3	63,621	38,242	* 101,863
4	61,221	36,986	* 98,207

Frederick Stevens,
Statistical Department.

of the 1st week of February 1895.

Children under 16.	Total.
8	1,201.

APPENDIX, No. 4.

PAPER handed in by Sir *Hugh Owen*, K.C.B., 20 February 1895.

INSPECTORS' DEPARTMENTS.

Counties.	Inspectors.	Counties.	Inspectors.
Bedford	Mr. Peel.	Norfolk	Mr. P. Thomas
Berks	Mr. Murray Browne.	Northampton	Mr. Peel.
Bucks	Mr. M. Browne.	Northumberland	Mr. Dawson.
Cambs	Mr. Peel, Mr. P. Thomas, (Wisbech).	Nottingham	Mr. Stevens.
Cheshire	Mr. Dansey.	Oxford	Mr. M. Browne.
Cornwall	Lord Courtenay.	Rutland	Mr. Stevens.
Cumberland	Mr. J. Fust; Mr. Dawson.	Salop	Mr. Dansey.
Derbyshire	Mr. Dansey (Ashborne); Mr. Stevens.	Somerset	Lord Courtenay; Mr. Longe.
Devonshire	Lord Courtenay.	Southampton	Mr. Fleming.
Dorset	Mr. Fleming.	Stafford	Mr. Longe; Mr. Dansey.
Durham	Mr. Dawson.	Suffolk	Mr. P. Thomas.
Essex	Mr. Lockwood (West Ham); Mr. P. Thomas.	Surrey	Mr. Murray Browne (Croydon, Richmond); Mr. Lockwood (Godstone); Mr. Davy (Farnham); Mr. Fleming.
Gloucester	Mr. Longe.		
Hereford	Mr. Longe; Mr. Dansey.	Sussex	Mr. Davy.
Herts	Mr. Peel.	Warwick	Mr. M. Browne.
Hunts	Mr. Peel.	Westmorland	Mr. J. Fust.
Kent	Mr. Davy.	Wilts	Mr. Fleming; Mr. Longe.
Lancashire	Mr. J. Fust.	Worcester	Mr. M. Browne (King's Norton), Mr. Longe (Tenbury); Mr. Dansey.
Leicester	Mr. Stevens.	Yorks:	
Lincoln	Mr. Stevens.	East Riding	Mr. Kennedy.
London	Mr. Lockwood.	North „	Mr. Dawson.
Middlesex	Mr. M. Browne; Mr. Peel.	West „	Mr. Kennedy; Mr. J. Fust (Two Unions).
Monmouth	Mr. Bircham.	Wales	Mr. Bircham.

Dear Sir, 13 February 1895.

THE President desires me to state that the House of Commons have to-day agreed to a resolution for the appointment of a Select Committee to consider and report as to (*a*) the extent to which distress, arising from want of employment, prevails; (*b*) the powers at present possessed by Local Authorities in relation to such cases; and (*c*) any steps which may be taken, whether by changes in legislation or administration, to deal with the evils arising therefrom; and to make an Interim Report to the House at the earliest possible date on what steps should be taken either by Parliament, the Departments of State, or Local Authorities to meet the distress this winter.

The President will be obliged if you will furnish him with a Report giving any information which you now possess as to the extent of destitution amongst able-bodied men in your district in consequence of their being out of work, and as to any exceptional measures which have been taken by the Guardians, whether by the opening of stone-yards or otherwise, with a view to affording relief in such cases; and also any information which you may have as to funds which have been raised by means of charity for meeting the distress.

The President will also be glad to be informed as to whether the present circumstances are, in your opinion, such as to make it desirable that there should be any temporary modification of the Regulations of the Board with regard to out-door relief in cases of able-bodied men who are out of work, and, if so, what modifications you would suggest.

The President will be obliged by you furnishing the Report in time for his receiving it on Monday next.

Yours, &c.

H. Jenner Fust, Junr., Esq.

22, Osborne Avenue, Newcastle-on-Tyne,
16 February, 1895.

Sir,

In compliance with the request contained in Sir Hugh Owen's letter of February 13th, I beg to submit the following report, though I fear that in consequence of the shortness of notice, the information that I can give is not so full as I should wish it to be.

The whole pauperism of each county in my district stood on January 1st, 1894 and 1895 respectively as follows :—

Counties.	1894.	1895.	
Cumberland: [4 Unions—Alston, Brampton, Carlisle, Longtown.] The remainder is in Mr. Jenner Fust's District.			
Cumberland (part of)	1,930	1,852	Decrease 78.
Durham. Northumberland	9,898	10,435	Increase 537.
Durham	22,511	22,934	Increase 423.
Northumberland. North Riding	10,345	9,908	Decrease 437.
York, N.R. Malton and Scarborough having been recently added.			

In the two counties which show an increase are the only two Unions, viz., Newcastle-on-Tyne and Darlington, in which the Guardians have opened stoneyards. In the latter the exceptional distress was caused by the closing of the steel works, which threw many men out of work ; in the former, the stoneyard was opened last November, but it is very doubtful whether there was any real necessity for its being opened at that time.

Ever since the beginning of the year the weather, as elsewhere, has been exceptionally severe, and there is no doubt that distress exists in a greater or less degree among all outdoor labouring men, except among the farm labourers, who being engaged on a yearly or half-yearly hiring would not be affected by the weather. But all the information that I have been able to obtain tends to show that the exceptional distress at present existing is entirely due to the weather, and that if, as at present seems probable, the frost breaks up the vast majority of genuine hardworking "unemployed" will soon be at work again, the prospects of work, on Tyneside especially, being brighter than they have been for the last two or three years. The trades mainly affected by the distress are the shipbuilders, masons, bricklayers, plasters, painters, and gardeners, in fact all outdoor work. With regard to the shipbuilding, the men themselves are to blame to a certain extent for the lack of work this winter, as if it had not been for the strike of the moulders and pattern makers last year, a great deal of work would have been laid down which would now be giving many men employment. Perhaps my best course will be to summarise the information which I have received from some of the largest Unions in my district.

Middlesbrough.

No exceptional distress before the severe weather. Exceptional distress at the present time, but expected to be temporary only.

The Middlesbrough Town Council and the Middlesbrough Owners have been asked to provide work, but say that they are unable to do so.

An attempt is being made to revive the Charity Organization Society which was at work during the Durham Miners' strike. Food is being distributed, but I do not gather that there is any organised system.

Darlington.

The maximum number in the stoneyard has been 296 ; the number on this day (February 16) is 254. The ordinary relief for the past week is only 3*l.* higher than last year, so that there is no exceptional distress except among the steel workers and their families. The numbers in the workhouse are lower than last year ; the week ended January 31st being 200 as against 215 last year. It will be seen that Sir T. Fry was mistaken in his statement that 500 able-bodied men were being relieved here, as I presume that it was to this Union that he referred in the House of Commons.

Hexham.

There have been in this Union, as there always are in time of severe weather like the present, some cases of relief of able-bodied men and their families reported to the Board for their sanction, mostly cases of gardeners thrown out of work by the frost. No exceptional pressure on the rates is expected, and I believe that any distress that may exist will be met by voluntary effort.

Tynemouth.

In this Union, which is largely dependant on shipbuilding, there has been considerable distress in consequence of the shipyards being closed on account of the severe weather, the stoppage of all building operations which had previously been very active, and the depression in the coal trade. This latter trade was exceptionally brisk in the preceding year, on account of the Midland strike, so that perhaps the comparison of the two years is hardly a fair one. No exceptional measures are expected to be necessary, and no public funds have been raised except in the shape of soup kitchens. It is expected here that there will be no lack of work when the weather changes.

Hartlepool.

No appreciable increase of applications for relief ; no exceptional measures expected to be necessary. The distress that does exist is mainly among dock and shipyard labourers. The West Hartlepool Charity Organization Society have dealt with 800 cases, and seem to have done very efficient service. The West Hartlepool Town Council opened a stoneyard on February 6th, but not more than an average of 12 men has worked there.

South Shields.

Distress existed before the severe weather, but not, as far as I can learn, to any great extent.

No pressure on the Poor Rate.

Jarrow and South Shields Town Councils are employing many men on permanent works, for which money is to be borrowed. In South Shields a fund has been raised, and is being administered by the School Board, for the benefit of the children, and another fund is being worked by a voluntary Committee for the relief of the unemployed and destitute adults.

Stockton.

No exceptional distress before the severe weather. There is now exceptional pressure on the rates, but not to any great extent.

No steps have been taken by any public body to provide employment.

A public relief fund has been in operation for about a week for the distribution of food and coals amongst the unemployed.

Sunderland.

No exceptional distress in this Union before the severe weather. A number of men out of work, but nothing more than has existed in preceding years. Only 16 applications from able-bodied men for relief against 20 in a similar space of time last year. Since the beginning of this month there has been a large increase of men out of work in consequence of the weather, and the Relieving Officers have given relief in kind to 546 able-bodied men and their families. This was done in pursuance of a Resolution of the Guardians, which has been reported to the Board, and a further application for the Board's approval will be necessary under Article 10 of the Out-door Relief Regulation Order.

Only a small number of the unemployed have been set to work by the Sunderland Town Council at clearing snow, and a few are still employed at other work.

During the past week the Mayor has started a relief fund, to which £1,200 have been subscribed, which is distributed in kind. The children attending Elementary Schools are receiving free breakfasts daily, and in some cases two or three dinners weekly.

Gateshead.

I notice that Mr. Allan said in the House that there were thousands of men out of work here. My information is that the actual number is about 1,000—bricklayers, masons, and mason's labourers, and a few shipyard men—not more than one in ten of whom were out of work before the frost. A Resolution to open a stone-yard was passed at one of the Board meetings, but on receipt of reports from the Relieving Officers it was rescinded a few days later. Between the two meetings there were not more than 31 applications for the yard. At the first meeting a deputation of men attended, and applied for work, to be paid at the rate of 6d. an hour, and not to entail disfranchisement. This was obviously only a Socialist manifesto, as, of course, the Guardians had no power to entertain such a proposal. There are two relief funds in existence in Gateshead, one under the Mayor, the other under the Guardians, and administered by the Relieving Officers. They have had about 250 applications to the latter, have expended about £50 in soup and groceries, and a great amount of coal has been given to the fund and distributed. There is also another relief fund at Felling. The out-relief before the frost was lower than it had been for some time, and if the weather would change work would have been much better than at this time last year.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.

The maximum number in the stoneyard here has been over 300, two-thirds of whom came from the Byker district, the East End of the town, but up to the commencement of the severe weather the numbers did not exceed 160. Here, as elsewhere, it is in the outdoor trades that the distress exists, very few skilled artisans having applied for relief. Indeed, at the great Armstrong Works at Elswick there are 2,000 more men employed now than at the same time last year. The prospect of work is said to be better than it has been for three years, and there are men now in the labour yard who have work to go to when the frost breaks up. The number of men out of work now in Byker may be put at 400, about half of whom were out of work before Christmas, and had been so for periods varying from one month to six months. The pressure before the frost was less than it had been at the same time for the last two years, and if the weather had remained open, would no doubt have diminished.

The Relieving Officers all report that they anticipate no serious difficulty in dealing with the distress, and that no exceptional steps, beyond those already taken, will be required. There has been hitherto no public Mayor's fund this year for the relief of the unemployed, which fact makes the apparent increase of distress greater, but a meeting has been held this day (February 16), under the presidency of the Mayor, to organise such a fund, and there are various smaller funds for children's breakfasts, soup kitchens, &c. Last year work was provided for a considerable number of men in planting the Town Moor, but this year I have heard of none being given, except in clearing the chief streets of snow.

Scarborough.

Since the severe weather set in there has been considerable distress, not only in the outdoor trades, but also among the fishermen and their families, but I have not heard of any exceptional pressure on the rates. The distress is being dealt with by the Charity Organization Society.

I do not believe that the present circumstances are such as to make it desirable that there should be any modification of the Regulations of the Board with regard to outdoor relief to able-bodied men out of work. Indeed, I think it would be most undesirable that the present Boards, many of which, especially in towns, contain a great number of Guardians who have had no previous experience of the Poor Law, and some of whom have come to their new duties with the fixed idea that everything should be changed, should be entrusted with any further discretionary powers.

I think that I ought not to omit to mention that there has been of late a great pressure on the male accommodation in the Workhouses. But I do not attribute that to any exceptional circumstances of the present time, but to the fact that men get thrown out of work at an earlier age than formerly. When a man reaches the age of 60 or thereabouts, and is no longer able to earn the full rate of wages, the trades unions object to his being retained in employment at a lower rate. These men either become permanent inmates of Workhouses or go to swell the great army of tramps on the roads.

I am, &c.,

To the Right Honourable George Shaw Lefevre, M.P., President of the Local Government Board.

(signed) *C. A. Dawson.*

Eastern District.

Sir Hugh Owen,

COUNTIES.

This district comprises the whole of Essex (except West Ham), Norfolk, and Suffolk, together with the Union of Wisbech in Cambridgeshire. Its population (1891) is 1,242,396. It contains only five towns with a population of more than 20,000, and outside these towns and a few smaller ones there are a few manufacturing industries. Yarmouth, Lowestoft, and Harwich depend largely on fishing, and at Barking and other points on the Thames there is a considerable riverside population concerned with barge traffic. Elsewhere, broadly speaking, the whole district (outside watering places) is almost entirely agricultural.

The severity of the winter has been, I gather, greater here than elsewhere, and it has specially affected those engaged in the cultivation of the land and the navigation of the water. Since the snowfall of the 1st January, there has been a hard frost, with only one intermission of three or four days, and during almost the whole of that time not only have agricultural operations been impossible, but bricklayers and other persons connected with the building trades have been reduced to forced inactivity, while for the last three or four weeks all the inland waterways have been closed. Moreover, the weather in the North Sea has been so bad as seriously to interrupt fishing.

It might have been expected, in these circumstances, that destitution among the able-bodied would be very widespread, and I confess that I am much surprised to find that, as a rule, it has not been too great for voluntary agencies to deal with. It is noticeable that the cases of pauper relief have only slightly risen as compared with those of last year, when the winter was a fairly mild one. The returns from 42 Unions in my district, for a week ending on some day in the present month (these returns are made up to various dates, and my receipt of them is somewhat irregular, but I take the latest in each case), show that there has in the aggregate been only an increase of 7 per cent. in the indoor paupers, and of 7 or 8 per cent. in the outdoor paupers, as compared with the returns for the corresponding week in 1894, and I have reason to believe that in many places, if it had not been for this protracted frost, the number of unemployed would have been much less than it was last year, and that directly the frost breaks up the accumulated amount of work will provide employment for an unusually large number of hands.

On the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, I wrote to the Clerks of 16 Boards of Guardians which I selected as for the most part containing considerable urban populations, while others were mainly agricultural. From 15 of these I received answers by return of post which I have summarised in the annexed table. It will be seen that in only one of these cases, viz., at Yarmouth, have the Guardians found it necessary to take exceptional measures by establishing a Labour Test. At Yarmouth, where outdoor relief is very freely and irregularly given, the Clerk is proud of the fact that owing to "the prompt and extended action of the Guardians there has been no public scheme of charity started," but I cannot help thinking that it would have been much better to relieve exceptional cases of temporary destitution by voluntary charity (which the Poor Law has a terrible tendency to crush out) rather than by forced contributions levied on the ratepayers, of whom many are themselves not much above the ranks of pauperism. In Ipswich the action of the Town Relief Association and of the Labour Bureau (described by Mr. Lockwood in the Appendix to the Board's Report just published) with which the Guardians co-operate, has worked admirably, with the result that there is no pressure on the administrators of the Poor Rate. In Bury St. Edmunds the Corporation have undertaken to employ persons recommended by the Relieving Officer, and have levied a rate of a penny, in order to establish relief works, at which wages are paid at the rate of 1*s.* 6*d.* a day. At Lowestoft, Norwich, and Colchester the Corporations have also, to a greater or less extent, provided work; and the same course is contemplated at Wisbech if the frost continue. But, as already stated, I anticipate that there will be plenty of employment throughout the district as soon as a thaw takes place.

If this should be deferred for two or three weeks it is possible that a large number of men will be unable to hold out any longer, and that the position may become critical. But I have not sufficient experience to warrant me in making any suggestion to the Board as to modifications of their regulations in that contingency.

(signed) *H. Preston-Thomas.*

February 17, 1895.

INFORMATION received from Clerks to Guardians.

UNION.	Population.	Extent of Destitution among Able-bodied Men.
Wisbech	32,219	Considerable amount of destitution
Braintree	28,481	Ditto (more than of late years)
Chelmsford	34,182	No great extent of destitution
Colchester	34,559	Not exceptional
Rochford (Southend)	30,271	None that the ordinary agencies are unable to cope with by ordinary means.
Romford	50,013	Little more destitution than in recent winters
Tendring	37,403	More distress than in recent years
King's Lynn	19,053	Not more destitution, either among able-bodied or others, than in previous winters.
Mitford and Launditch	26,319	Unusual amount of distress
Norwich	100,970	Distress above the average
Yarmouth (Great)	48,734	Considerable
Bury St. Edmunds	16,630	Unusually large
Ipswich	57,081	Exceptionally large number of unemployed, but no material increase in the application for relief as compared with those in previous winters. This is owing to the action of the Town Relief Association.
Mutford and Lothingland (Lowestoft)	35,023	No exceptional distress
Sudbury	29,612	A large number of men out of work, as in previous winters of unusual severity.

INFORMATION received from Clerks to Guardians.

Special Measures by Guardians.	Charitable Funds Raised.	Return as to Cases of Relief by Guardians.				
		Week ended February	Indoor.		Outdoor.	
			1895.	1894.	1895.	1894.
None considered necessary (but Town Council are considering question of Relief Works).	Fund started on 14th February; 160*l.* already raised.	6	203	211	1,219	1,210
- - none - - -	Relief Fund started (more charitable help given than heretofore).	9	268	257	1,109	1,105
- - none - - -	Soup kitchens established - -	9	276	267	1,175	1,158
None (but Corporation have started works employing a large number of men).	Soup and bread supplied by public subscriptions.	9	287	272	909	884
- - none - - -	Relief Fund started in Southend and one or two other places.	9	199	171	795	784
- - none - - -	- - none - - -	11	355	375	1,154	1,075
None (a few able-bodied men relieved with bread).	Soup kitchens established in the populous districts.	5	216	219	886	808
- - none - - -	- - none - - -	7	202	177	746	738
- - none - - -	Funds started for providing coal for the unemployed, also one for providing dinners for their children.					
None (but Town Council have assisted in providing work for special and needy cases).	Fund raised by District Visiting Society.	9	836	726	3,185	2,875
Cases of urgency relieved at once, and Labour Test Yards started).	"In consequence of the prompt and extended action of the Guardians there has been no public scheme of charity started."	2	496	472	2,416	1,445
Guardians have arranged with Corporation to employ persons recommended by Relieving Officer. For this purpose the Corporation "have levied upon the town a penny rate for wages, and have also opened relief works at the rate of 1*s.* 6*d.* a day of seven hours."	None reported - - - -	14	135	139	586	540
- - none - -	Town Relief Association have dispensed over 200*l.* in relief.	6	237	201	687	667
None (but Corporation have employed a large number of extra men in making good the damage done by the recent high tides).	- - none - - -	2	247	192	865	850
- - none - - -	Funds raised to give work in chopping wood. Much charity by private persons and District Visitors.	13	199	195	718	731

Counties.

Chester.

Derby.
[Ashbourne Union.]

Hereford
[Kington, Leominster, Weobley.]

Salop.

Stafford.
[All but six Unions.]*

Worcester.
[One Union, Tenbury.]

* The ten Stafford Unions this district are:—Burton-on-Trent, Cannock, Cheadle, Leek, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stafford, Stoke-upon-Trent, Stone, Uttoxeter, Wolstanton and Burslem. The other six are in Mr. Inge's district.

Sir, 17 February, 1895.

In reply to Sir Hugh Owen's letter of the 13th inst., I have the honour to report that, so far as my information extends, Boards of Guardians in my district have not generally found it necessary to take exceptional means to meet the distress occasioned by the prolonged frost. Considerable distress undoubtedly exists throughout the district, owing to labourers, bricklayers, gardeners, and others, being thrown out of employment, but this is being largely relieved by private charity and local subscriptions.

I may observe that at the last meetings of the Newport (Salop), Chester, Birkenhead, and Northwich Boards of Guardians, which I attended, no application for relief was received on behalf of an able-bodied man, and the Birkenhead Guardians were of opinion that there was no exceptional distress in the town, as the unusual quantity of cotton, lately imported, had found employment for so many men.

The only labour yards opened are at Stockport and Stoke-on-Trent.

At Stockport about 200 men are being relieved under the Out-Relief Regulation Order, and considerable distress is reported to exist owing to the hard weather, and great distress in the cotton trade. The number of men relieved is much higher than it has been for some months, but even in the Summer months I found a considerable number of men doing task work on land adjoining this workhouse.

At Stoke-on-Trent, owing mainly to the stoppage of Lord Granville's iron works, several hundred men have been thrown out of employment, and about ten days ago the Guardians were obliged to open a labour yard at the Workhouse. The task of work is stone breaking, oakum picking, and wood chopping, under the superintendence of the industrial trainer in farming. The relief given is in proportion to the number in family, and runs from 5*s.* per week, for a man with a wife and no child, up to 12*s.* per week for a man with a wife and five children. The relief is given partly in kind and partly in money, and in addition a dinner is given to the men at mid-day. The number of men now being relieved is between 120 and 150, and the number of indoor paupers is 1,081 and outdoor 2,324, as compared with 980 indoor and 2,132 outdoor at this time last year.

I have inquired of the clerks of the other populous Unions in the district, and though they agree that there is a great amount of distress in their Unions, occasioned by the hard weather, they do not anticipate that the Guardians will be obliged to take exceptional measures to meet it, unless the frost is further prolonged.

With regard to a temporary modification of the Order of the Board, I do not myself think such a course desirable, and this is the opinion of all the more experienced Guardians with whom I have conferred.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Richard L. Dansey.*

The Right Honourable G. J. Shaw-Lefevre, M.P.,
President of the Local Government Board.

Counties.

Gloucester.

Hereford.
[All but three Unions.]

Somerset.
[Bath, Bedminster, Keynsham.]

Stafford.
[Six Unions.]*

Wilts.
[Cricklade and West Bromwich, Highworth and Swindon.]

Worcester.
[All but Tenbury (Mr. Dansey), and King's Norton (Mr. M. Browne.)]

* The six Unions in Stafford are Lichfield, Seisdon, Tamworth, Walsall, West Bromwich, Wolverhampton.

Sir, Cheltenham, 16 February, 1895.

There is undoubtedly at the present time a great deal of distress and destitution among the lower classes of the wage-earning population in every part of my district, due to the protracted frost, and which is for the most part being relieved by public charity, and otherwise.

Among the sufferers from want of employment, there are (particularly in the South Staffordshire and Worcestershire districts, and in the City of Bristol) many men who have been out of work, or only partially employed during previous months, owing to the absence of a demand for their labour in particular trades, as well as a large number of the idle and dissolute who always appear to share in the benefits of any measures taken for the relief of the unemployed in the winter season. I assume, however, that you have intended that Inspectors should direct their observations rather to the temporary distress caused by the frost among those who would be otherwise occupied in their usual industries than to the more difficult and chronic problem of the surplus or unwanted labour. The two problems are altogether different—both as to the disease and the remedy.

From the information I have gathered as to the condition of the working classes in my district at the beginning of this year, I have no reason to think that there was a larger number of working men out of employment than in previous years at the same time.

The increase in the pauper rolls of the several Unions was very slight, and in some populous Unions, where employment is affected largely by the state of trade, such as West Bromwich, Stourbridge, Kidderminster, and Stroud, there was an actual decrease on last year's returns.

The classes now suffering from being deprived of their weekly earnings by the frost are—

(*a.*) Almost all classes of labourers and workmen belonging to the building trade (in all towns).

(*b.*) Gardeners and job labourers (in all towns).
Gardener's labourers are very numerous in the Evesham and Pershore Unions.

(*c.*) Brickmakers numerous in Oldbury, Stourbridge, Dudley, and other parts of the Black Country.

(*d.*) Boatmen on the canals and rivers in the Black Country, Worcester, Droitwich, Tewkesbury, and elsewhere.

(*e.*) Agricultural labourers in rural parishes, and in small country towns, for whom farmers cannot find employment, or afford to employ.

Since the frost set in at the beginning of the year, there has been an increase in the number of recipients of poor relief in almost every Union, but it does not appear from my latest returns that the Poor Law authorities have as yet been called upon to take more than a very slight part in relieving the destitution caused by the frost. The total addition to the pauper rolls of the 44 Unions in my district does not exceed 6,000, although there are several Unions in which more than this number have been relieved from other sources.

The only Union where the Guardians have adopted any special measures for relieving the able-bodied since the beginning of the year is Walsall. Relief under the Labour Test and Regulation Orders, with employment in stonebreaking or on the land, was being given to able-bodied men out of employment during the greater part of last year by the Guardians of Bristol, Barton Regis, Bedminster, and Stourbridge. This relief has since been open to all able-bodied men in distress from the frost, but no great increase in the number thus relieved has taken place in any of these Unions.

In Barton Regis (population 193,000) the number of able-bodied men in the stoneyard was 36 in December. This number increased to 111 on the 31st January. On the 14th inst. the total number of able-bodied men (in health) receiving relief was 150.

In the Bedminster Union (population 77,000) 104 men were employed in the Guardians stone quarry on the 5th December, and on the 31st January 110.

In the Bristol City Union (population 55,000) 46 men were relieved with employment on the Guardians' land on the 2nd January. On the 13th inst. the number had risen to 94. On this day, however, the Corporation offered work to 100 men from this Union, and the whole left the Guardians' labour yard.

The Walsall Guardians (population 100,000) have been relieving the destitute able-bodied by grants of relief in kind dispensed carefully by their Relieving Officer, without any labour test. The number of men thus relieved was, on the 22nd January, 72. Last week this number was increased to 160. Since the opening of the Mayor's Fund this relief has been stopped, to be resumed if needed.

In

In all the more populous Unions in my district, besides those mentioned in which relief to the able-bodied is now being given out of the workhouse, the Guardians are familiar with the system of relieving this class under the Labour Test Order, and in some of these Unions a very much larger number of this class has been so relieved at times within my experience than are now being relieved in any Union. No doubt the reason why Guardians have not (as yet, at all events), been called upon to take a greater part in the relief of this distress is that it is being met to greater extent than in former years by well organised relief funds, and by the offer of employment by Town Councils and Local Boards.

In Cheltenham employment at 3*s.* per day has been given to several hundreds of able-bodied men for several days in clearing snow, and upwards of 200 men are now regularly employed in work on the sewage farm.

A relief fund has been subscribed to in excess of immediate needs. Soup, bread, and coals are being distributed to the necessitous throughout the town.

In Bristol the Mayor's Relief Fund has already reached to upwards of 3,000*l.*, and the Corporation is employing 300 men sent to them by the Guardians.

In Wolverhampton relief is being dispensed by a system of house-to-house visitation organised by the Mayor and Town Council.

I see also from the reports in newspapers that relief funds have been started in Bath, Bedminster, Keynsham, and other places in the South. In Oldbury, Walsall, West Bromwich, Dudley, Handsworth, Tamworth in the North, and at Shipston-on-Stour, Evesham, Gloucester, and other towns in the centre of my district.

I have no reason to doubt that in all large centres of population, as well in the smaller towns and country villages, voluntary methods of this kind are being very generally, if not universally, taken to meet the present emergency, and that unless checked by interference from without, these relief funds will be replenished from week to week should the frost continue.

As regards the duty of Guardians—however difficult the problem of dealing with able-bodied destitution in ordinary times—when this destitution is only the temporary destitution of working men prevented from following their usual occupations by frost, and who will be at work again, in all probability, in a few days or weeks at the utmost, their task of relieving such distress, when called upon to do so, would seem to be very simple.

In such an emergency labour tests are not necessary, if practicable.

The arrangements required for providing employment, either in-doors or out-of-doors, would probably not be completed before the need for them had ceased But the 52nd Section of the Statute of Will. IV., which empowered the Poor Law Commissioners to issue the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Orders, contains a proviso which gives Guardians the power, in cases of "emergency," of relieving the able-bodied out of the workhouse by grants of relief in kind, whether with or without any labour test, which is, in my opinion, quite sufficient to meet the needs of the present emergency in every Union in my district, if the Guardians should be called upon, by the failure of voluntary relief, to exercise that power.

I know of no objection to its exercise, but the apprehension of abuse, and the need of an increased staff of Assistant Relieving Officers to secure the proper dispensing of the relief.

I believe that it is far less open to abuse than the delusive labour-test system. In the Bedminster Union, during the coal strike of 1893, several hundreds of colliers and their families were thus relieved, without the suspicion of any abuse. The Guardians of the Walsall Union have been, during this month and the month of January, relieving upwards of 160 able-bodied men with families by grants of bread and groceries through the Relieving Officer (as mentioned above). In saying that, I regard these means of meeting the necessities of the able-bodied and their families during the continuance of the present frost as fully adequate. I, of course, do not consider that it is the duty either of voluntary charity, or any local or other authority having public funds at their disposal, to do more than provide them with the bare necessaries of life in the shape of food and warmth, nor do I believe that the industrious and honest poor claim more.

I am, &c.,
(signed) *Francis D. Longe.*

The Right Honourable
The President of the Local Government Board.

Sir, Godalming, 17 February 1895.

In reply to the memorandum conveying to me the President's wish for information with regard to the distress at present prevailing, I have the honour to state as follows :—

It is a matter of regret to me that the time available was too short to enable me to make a personal investigation ; but from my knowledge of the district, and of the conditions existing at this moment, I feel able with some confidence to answer the questions referred to me.

There is a large amount of distress throughout the district generally at the present moment, resulting from the long-continued frost.

Until the frost, the state of the district was, on the whole, favourable as compared with last year.

I annex a statement showing (from the last Forms A.) the numbers of persons in receipt of relief this year as compared with last year, and the numbers for the two last weeks for which the information has reached me.

The Board will observe that these figures present no alarming indications.

It is true that the position of pauperism is not an absolutely correct guide to the amount of destitution which may exist, and probably great efforts are now being made to avoid relief which would disfranchise the recipient. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the comparison of pauperism at the dates of the annexed returns may fairly be taken to show that, apart from the influence of the weather, the condition of my district would be satisfactory. The tables I forward contain information with regard to the most populous and important towns and Unions.

I am not in a position to give, even approximately, the numbers of the unemployed, and, indeed, any general statement would be extremely misleading as bearing upon the present distress.

In such places as Portsmouth and Southampton, for instance, there are always a considerable number of men, with or without families dependent upon them, whose employment in the winter time is of a very precarious description. The relief of these men forms a chronic difficulty which is only accentuated by the severity of the present winter, and often during any ordinary season they might rightly be enumerated among the unemployed.

The existing distress affects quite another class of person—those who would under ordinary circumstances be in regular winter work, and whose present destitution arises from the exceptional bitterness and duration of the frost.

In Portsmouth and in Southampton relief funds have been started, and the Local Authorities are making great efforts to find employment for as many as possible, who will thus be provided for with the necessity of recourse to rate relief.

Other places where great distress is experienced are also, so far as my information goes, doing their very best to prevent hardship and to relieve destitution, in the manner most conducive to the interests of the sufferers.

Up to the present time there has been no serious pressure upon the resources available to the Poor Law Authorities, either as regards indoor or outdoor relief, and the requests to the Board for sanction to out-relief to the able-bodied have been remarkably few so far as they have been brought to my knowledge.

No applications of an unusual character from Boards of Guardians or Local Authorities have come under my observation with the one exception of the wish of the Portsea Island Guardians to subscribe 500*l.* to the Mayor of Portsmouth's Relief Fund. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Clerk to Guardians explained this application to Sir Hugh Owen in person, but they were unable to make out any case which would have warranted the Board in acceding to what (however well-intentioned) was a very ill advised proposal.

Counties.

Dorset.
Southampton.
Surrey.
[Farnham.]
Wilts.
[All except the two which are in Mr. Longe's district, viz. Highworth and Swindon, and Cricklade and West Bromwich.]

At Portsmouth, and I believe in every other Union in this district, the Guardians and the Relieving Officers are fully aware that every urgent case of destitution should be relieved at once, and that there is full power for such relief to be afforded as may best meet the necessities of the person or family in need. Not only is there power to meet the destitution which may be found to prevail, but it is the distinct duty of the Relieving Officer to grant the relief that is required, and he is responsible if he fail to do so in any case within his knowledge. Moreover, where pressing necessity exists, the Overseers have power to act.

With regard to the Prohibitory and Kindred Orders, it does not appear to me that their provisions might with advantage be relaxed.

The exceptions are so sufficient that no hardship can well result merely from the effect of those Orders. Guardians generally are well aware that in times like the present the Board interpret the exceptions in a liberal sense, and that in cases where the Board's sanction is necessary to the relief, that sanction is as readily given as is consistent with the objects of the Regulations.

I cannot call to mind any instance in which hardship has been substantiated as resulting from the operation of the Prohibitory or Relief Test Orders, and I think it would be an administrative mistake to weaken the influence of those Orders at the present moment.

The effect of this Minute may be summed up thus :—

There is a very large amount of acute and widespread distress at the present moment. Such distress is of an exceptional character owing to the exceptional severity of the winter.

If it had not been for these exceptional circumstances, the condition of my district generally would have been favourable as compared with last year.

The Local Authorities are exerting themselves actively, and on the whole successfully, to provide relief as far as is practicable, without rendering recourse to rate-relief necessary. In this they are generously aided by the public subscriptions.

There is no serious pressure upon the resources at the disposal of the Poor Law Authorities, and the Guardians are quite alive to the necessities of the situation.

It is not desirable that the provisions of the Board's Orders should be varied.

I have, &c.,

To the Secretary of the Local Government Board. (signed) *Baldwyn Fleming.*

UNION.	1895.								1894.			
	Week ending	In-door.	Out-door.	Total.	Week ending	In-door.	Out-door.	Total.	Week ending	In-door.	Out-door.	Total.
Dorchester - - -	Feb. 5	97	526	623	Feb. 12	101	524	625	Feb. 13	95	579	674
Poole - - - - -	Jan. 29	79	754	833	„ 5	82	734	816	„ 6	105	765	870
Weymouth - - -	„ 19	184	807	991	Jan. 26	185	798	983	Jan. 27	147	777	924
Christchurch - -	Jan. 26	242	705	947	Feb. 2	243	679	922	Feb. 3	254	598	852
Hartley Wintney -	„ 30	102	436	538	„ 6	100	411	511	„ 7	121	401	522
Portsea Island - -	Feb. 5	1,786	2,883	4,669	„ 12	1,801	2,953	4,754	„ 13	1,800	3,350	5,150
Southampton - -	Jan. 30	612	1,637	2,249	„ 6	617	1,632	2,249	„ 7	570	1,628	2,198
South Stoneham -	Feb. 4	296	1,332	1,628	„ 11	298	1,356	1,654	„ 12	265	1,316	1,581
Winchester - - -	Jan. 25	190	638	828	„ 1	191	614	805	„ 2	180	645	825
Alderbury - - -	Feb. 7	222	812	1,034	Feb. 14	224	795	1,019	Feb. 15	220	765	985
Devizes - - -	Jan. 26	146	694	840	„ 2	148	677	825	„ 3	142	675	817
Melksham - - -	Feb. 2	163	513	676	„ 9	162	508	670	„ 10	158	425	583
Warminster - -	Jan. 26	67	628	695	„ 2	66	628	694	„ 3	54	616	670

Sir, Kenton, Exeter, 16 February 1895.

COUNTIES.

Cornwall.
Devon.
Somerset.
[All; except three Unions in r. Longe's district, viz., Bath, dminster, and Keynsham.

In reply to your letter of the 13th of February asking for any information that I could give with regard to the destitution amongst the able-bodied men in my district in consequence of their being out of work, and as to the measures taken by the Guardians, and also as to funds raised by charity, I beg to send you the following Report :—

On the receipt of your letter I addressed a communication to the Clerks of the different Boards of Guardians in my district, a copy of which I annex. In reply to that communication I have received answers from all the Unions in Cornwall, from all but one in Devon, but of that Union I am able to speak from personal knowledge, and from all but four in Somerset, one of which Unions, namely Taunton, I visited last Wednesday, and am therefore able to state the circumstances myself.

I append to this Report, in a tabular form, the substance of the answers I have received, which will, I hope, give the information required.

It will, I think, be seen from these returns that, though there is no doubt some amount of exceptional distress in the district, yet it is in most cases being met, as in my opinion it ought to be, by Local Authorities other than Poor Law, and by private charity. Under these circumstances I do not consider that any modification of the ordinary out-relief orders is necessary, the Guardians having at present full powers to deal with ordinary cases of destitution, while extraordinary cases should be met, as I am glad to say they are in most cases in my district, by public and private charity.

It will be noticed that in one or two Unions the Guardians have ordered increased relief as a whole, and not in individual cases. This course came under my notice at Plymouth and Taunton, and I there held, as I believe the Board always have held, that such a course was contrary to the proper administration of out-relief, and those Guardians acted upon my advice.

Of the Unions which have sent me no returns I have dealt with Exeter and Taunton. Axbridge, which includes the populous watering place of Weston-super-Mare, and Shepton Mallet, where there are large brewery works, I have no knowledge of the distress or the means taken to meet it ; but Dulverton, which is a purely agricultural and thinly-populated Union, is not likely to be much affected.

I annex

I annex the letter I sent out, and the substance of the answer given in each Union put in a tabular form, as being the readiest and quickest mode of giving the information required by the President, and I hope that it will meet his views.

I am, &c.,
(signed) *Courtenay.*
Inspector, Local Government Board.

To Sir Hugh Owen, K.C.B.,
Local Government Board.

COPY of Letter sent to Clerks to Guardians.

SIR, Kenton, Exeter, 14 February, 1895.

I shall be glad if you will inform me, by return of post, whether in your Union there is much destitution among able-bodied men in consequence of the present severe weather. Whether any exceptional measures have been taken by the Guardians in consequence, and also what means have been taken, either by public bodies or private charity, for meeting the distress.

Yours, &c.,
C.

	CORNWALL UNIONS.
Not much destitution among able-bodied. There is a distress fund at St. Austell. The Guardians have increased relief for four weeks in many cases.	St. Austell.
A good deal of destitution. The Guardians have taken no exceptional measures. The matter has been taken up by private charity.	Bodmin.
No destitution, and no exceptional measures taken.	Camelford.
No distress recorded as yet.	St. Columb.
No exceptional distress has been brought under the notice of the Guardians. A relief fund in Falmouth Town.	Falmouth.
No exceptional distress except in the Borough of Saltash, where subscriptions are being raised and labour being found.	St. Germans.
Destitution to some degree. The Cornwall County Council has taken up relief to miners. A Relief Committee has been formed for Helston Town.	Helston.
No able-bodied application to the Guardians. Private charity both in town and country.	Launceston.
In the parish of St. Cleer a deputation to the Guardians asking the Highway Board to find work, which has been done. The District Council have asked the County Council to open a register for the unemployed.	Liskeard.
Many able-bodied men out of employ. The Guardians have not yet taken exceptional measures; nor any public bodies. A balance of the Miners' Cornish Distress Fund is being utilized.	Penzance.
There is a considerable amount of distress among miners and tin-streamers; but there is a balance from a fund collected in former times of distress, out of which money has been voted to different Urban and Rural Councils to find employment for men.	Redruth.
Very few unemployed. The Highway Authority are employing a few extra men.	Stratton.
Very few applications from able-bodied. There is a distress fund in Truro Town.	Truro.
	DEVON UNIONS
No exceptional distress. Soup kitchens and private charity.	Axminster.
No exceptional distress. A Relief Committee in Barnstaple and Ilfracombe, with voluntary subscriptions.	Barnstaple.
The Guardians have not taken any exceptional measures. A relief fund in Bideford Town, and the Town Council are employing men.	Bideford.
No exceptional action taken by the Guardians. There is a Relief Fund in Crediton, and private charity.	Crediton.
No exceptional measures taken by Guardians, but the coal, soup-kitchen, and blanket societies have combined to give relief, and the District Council are giving work.	East Stonehouse.
No return from the Clerk, but destitution has been met by municipal charity and voluntary subscriptions. There are a considerable number of unemployed here.	Exeter.
No distress.	Holsworthy.
Only in the Parish of Honiton have any cases of destitution come before the Guardians. The Relieving Officer is instructed to relieve in kind. The Town Council are employing men, and the Mayor has opened a Relief Fund, and there is a soup-kitchen.	Honiton.
No exceptional distress.	Kingsbridge.
Distress, especially at Torquay. The Guardians have not yet taken any exceptional measures. The Town Council at Torquay are finding work, and there are special Relief Funds in Towns in the Union.	Newton Abbot.
There is not much destitution. Private charity.	Okehampton.
The Guardians have taken no exceptional measures except granting coal in individual cases. The Mayor has started an exceptional distress fund which is now over 800*l.*	Plymouth.
The Guardians have instructed their Relieving Officers to give extra relief in kind in all cases where necessary, and there is also private charity for dispensing coal, soup, &c.	Plympton St. Mary.
No destitution. No exceptional measures taken by the Guardians. In the Borough of South Molton itself the Town Council find work, and there have been free gifts of loaves, coal, and soup.	South Molton.
There is no exceptional distress.	Stoke Damerel.
A good deal of distress, especially at Calstock, met by private charity.	Tavistock.
There is distress; but no pressure on the Guardians, being met by private charity.	St. Thomas.
There have been no increased applications to the Guardians for relief. In Tiverton and other places soup-kitchens and private charity.	Tiverton.

Somerset Unions.

Torrington. Not much destitution except in Great Torrington, where the Town Council are meeting the case with soup-kitchen and work.

Totnes. In Totnes itself the Town Council are providing work. A soup-kitchen and private charity. No large increase of applications for relief.

Axbridge. No return.

Bridgwater. There is much local suffering and destitution. The Guardians have given heads of families requiring relief 6*d.* per week for two weeks. The Mayor and a Committee have opened a soup kitchen. There is a Local Ladies' Relief Committee, and private charity.

Chard. No exceptional measures have been taken by the Guardians. Private and organised charities are dealing with cases. The factories are working.

Clutton. There is not much destitution in consequence of the weather. The Guardians have granted 1*s.* a week for two weeks extra relief to every adult pauper.

Dulverton. No return; but it is unlikely, from the nature of the Union, that there is much distress.

Frome. No exceptional distress has been brought to the notice of the Guardians. The Urban District Councils are finding work. No organised steps taken by subscription. Churches and chapels are giving away coals and soup. The factories are working full time.

Langport. No exceptional distress. The Guardians have granted 6*d.* per week to each pauper family. No public body taken any steps, and there is no relief organisation.

Shepton Mallet. No return.

Taunton. No return from the clerk, but I know there is a certain amount of distress in Taunton itself, which is being met by the Local Authorities and private charity.

Wellington. There is not much exceptional distress. Private charity and a Relief Committee in Wellington.

Wells. The Union statistics do not point to more than ordinary destitution. A relief fund in the City of Wells opened by the Mayor; in rural parishes private charity.

Williton. No exceptional distress has come to the knowledge of the Guardians. No public or private bodies doing anything.

Wincanton. A good deal of destitution. The Guardians are relieving applicants in kind. In the larger parishes Relief Committees have been formed. A communication has been forwarded to the Local Government Board asking to relieve able-bodied men.

Yeovil. Destitution of able-bodied men caused partly by severe weather; principally by the depression in the glove trade. In Yeovil Town the Mayor has formed a Relief Committee. In rural parishes private charity. No exceptional measures have been taken by the Guardians.

Distress from Want of Work.—Frost.

Sir,

In reply to Sir Hugh Owen's letter of February 13, on the above-named points, I have the honour to submit the following Report:

Owing to the short space (necessarily) allowed me, it is obvious that my Report can only be brief and hurried.

I will take the several points raised in Sir Hugh Owen's letter seriatim.

Counties in District.

Berks.
Bucks.
Middlesex.
[All; except Hendon and Edmonton.]
Oxford.
Surrey.
[Except as below.]*
Warwick.
Worcester.
[King's Norton.]

[* There are seven Surrey Unions in this district:—
Chertsey, Dorking, Epsom, Guildford, Hambledon, Kingston, Reigate.
The other four are:—
Godstone (Mr. Davy), Farnham (Mr. Fleming), Croydon and Richmond (Mr. Lockwood).

(*a*) *Extent of Destitution.*

I attach a Table showing the number of inmates in the Workhouses, &c., of the 52 Unions in my District for the last week reported to me, as compared with the corresponding week of last year. It will be seen that although most of the Unions show an increase over last year, yet that the total percentage of increase is small. This does not point to any extraordinary pressure upon the resources of the poor at the present moment. Nor do I anywhere observe that the number in receipt of outdoor relief has increased to an extraordinary extent. Further than this I have no accurate statistics. I have no doubt, however, that there is much distress among the poor. At the same time, I do not think that the amount of distress is anything altogether abnormal and extraordinary. Moreover, it varies very much in different places. In purely agricultural districts, distress appears to be less felt, or, at any rate, less outcry is made about it. In Birmingham I am assured that the distress, though grave, is on the whole fairly met by charity and in other ways. In Leamington the same is the case. In Coventry, and in the mining districts of North Warwickshire, the distress, though considerable, does not appear to be greater than has been experienced in previous winters. On the other hand, in the Union of Brentford, distress is stated to be of extraordinary extent. I am not certain, however, that the expression of this calamity is not exaggerated, in consequence of the vacillating and injudicious policy of the Guardians, and their known want of Workhouse accommodation.

As regards the trades especially affected by stagnation at the present moment, these are, principally, the building trades, market-gardening, and canal work. Other occupations are, no doubt, also affected, though to a lesser extent; and a general dulness prevails, except in a few instances, such as plumbers, the house coal pits, &c.

As regards the building trades, it is to be observed, as some sort of set off, that the winter, up to January 1st, was unusually open and favourable.

(*b*) *As to Exceptional Measures taken by the Guardians.*

They have hitherto been few. One or two Unions have opened stone-yards, but not to a large extent. The Birmingham Guardians have increased their usual scale of relief (in many cases) to meet the additional need of firing, &c., and have instructed their Relieving Officers to supply coal in all urgent cases. This is an example which might be followed elsewhere. On the other hand, the Brentford Guardians have taken the unusual step of closing their stone-yard for (at least) a week, granting relief without a task of work—the avowed object being to enable the stone-yard men to supplement their (possibly) insufficient scale of relief by getting odd jobs outside (or by begging?). It is to be hoped that this example will not be generally followed.

(c) As to Charitable Funds.

These I believe to be, under one name or another, largely at work everywhere. A hard frost never fails to open the pockets of the richer classes. And it is in this way that exceptional distress is at present, in my opinion, alleviated.

I may, perhaps, be permitted to add a few words upon the subject of any special efforts made by Town or District Councils to furnish employment at the present time to the unemployed. The removal of snow has been carried out this winter to an unusually large extent. But otherwise not much has, to my knowledge, been attempted in this direction. A severe frost is, of course, a bad time in which to attempt the employment of labour. Some effort might perhaps be made, however, to carry out additional scavenging and cleansing in the manner pointed out in my report to be published in the Annual Report of the Board for 1893-94 (not yet issued).

In conclusion, I desire to deprecate with the utmost earnestness any general modification of the Regulations of the Board with regard to out-relief, or any other panic legislation. Any such step at the present moment would, I am satisfied, be most disastrous. It would be regarded only as giving the signal for a general scramble, in which no one would benefit but the undeserving. The Board has never shown any disposition to be over-strict with regard to what is done in a time of emergency. Local Authorities have, in my opinion, ample means of dealing with the present difficulty. If in any special case they desire those means to be augmented, let them apply for what they want. The distress is felt with very different severity in different places. It should be met by the Local Authorities according to the needs of each locality.

I have, &c.
(signed) *T. LL. Murray Browne*,
Inspector.

To the Right Hon.
The President of the Local Government Board,
15 February 1895.

INDOOR PAUPERISM in Mr. *Murray Browne's* District for last Week reported.

UNIONS.	Week ending	Number of Paupers in Workhouse for One Week, 1895.	Number for corresponding Week, 1894.
BERKS:	1895:		
Abingdon	Feb. 2	184	178
Bradfield	Jan. 26	113	118
Cookham	Jan. 26	176	182
Easthampstead	Jan. 26	129	119
Faringdon	Feb. 9	113	129
Hungerford	Feb. 2	111	111
Newbury	Feb. 2	200	211
Reading	Feb. 5	413	396
Wallingford	Feb. 4	158	143
Wantage	Feb. 2	124	108
Windsor	Jan. 26	286	279
Wokingham	Jan. 26	111	119
TOTAL Berks		2,118	2,093
BUCKS:			
Amersham	Feb. 4	121	116
Aylesbury	Jan. 26	100	94
Buckingham	Feb. 8	95	75
Eton	Feb. 2	172	155
Newport Pagnell	Jan. 26	111	127
Winslow	Jan. 31	26	75
Wycombe	Jan. 26	233	234
TOTAL Bucks		858	826
PART OF MIDDLESEX			
Brentford	Jan. 26	489	512
Staines	Feb. 2	239	240
Uxbridge	Feb. 2	169	178
TOTAL Middlesex		897	930
OXFORD:			
Banbury	Feb. 6	253	223
Bicester	Jan. 31	92	77
Chipping Norton	Feb. 5	125	109
Headington	Jan. 26	148	128
Henley	Jan. 26	108	120
Oxford	Feb. 2	292	277
Thame	Jan. 26	83	93
Witney	Feb. 2	177	184
Woodstock	Feb. 4	117	104
TOTAL Oxford		1,395	1,315
PART OF SURREY:	1895:		
Chertsey	Jan. 26	227	227
Dorking	Feb. 2	132	119
Epsom	Feb. 5	452	445
Guildford	Feb. 1	348	325
Hambledon	Jan. 30	123	216
Kingston	Feb. 9	496	445
Reigate	Feb 2	181	184
TOTAL Surrey		1,959	1,871
WARWICK:			
Alcester	Feb. 4	112	106
Aston	Feb. 9	1,349	1,191
Atherstone	Feb. 2	44	49
Birmingham	Feb. 3	3,204	3,127
Coventry	Feb. 2	395	404
Foleshill	Feb. 4	122	114
Meriden	Feb. 2	79	68
Nuneaton	Jan. 26	64	60
Rugby	Feb. 9	150	122
Solihull	Jan. 29	111	114
Southam	Feb. 3	66	76
Stratford-on-Avon	Jan. 31	157	141
Warwick	Feb. 9	343	331
TOTAL Warwick		6,196	5,903
WORCESTER:			
King's Norton	Feb. 5	456	409
TOTAL OF DISTRICT		13,879	13,347

District.
Wales and Monmouth.

Dear Sir Hugh Owen, Gwentland, Chepstow, 17 February 1895.

In reply to your letter of the 13th instant, I have to state, for the information of the President, that I have visited most of the important unions in South Wales during the past few days, and have been in communication with those of the other parts of Wales up to present date; and I do not learn that any very exceptional measures have had to be taken by any of the Boards of Guardians in the district for the relief of able-bodied men out of work.

s to measures ken by Boards Guardians.

In Cardiff I only found 16 men in the labour yard (15th February), which has been opened at the workhouse under the Outdoor Labour Test Order, and of these more than half were not strictly able-bodied at all. In Swansea (15th February) three men only had accepted the Guardians' offer to work on the Cottage Homes Farm, and in no other union had there been any employment of able-bodied by the Guardians under the Order. In Newport the Guardians refer such cases entirely to the Corporation stone yard. Yesterday (16th February) there were but eight.

unicipal and istrict Council uthorities.

In most unions the Municipal or Urban Authorities are taking steps to a greater or less extent to give work to the unemployed, but this can, of course, only be, with the present weather, of a limited character. In many cases the District Councils are giving such employment as they can to men out of work; and this I observe to be the case with Rural District Councils as well, who, as they have now the charge of the roads, are in a better position for affording employment in times of emergency than were the Rural Sanitary Authorities, who would not probably have been able to find such employment at a time like the present. Still it is not work that could be provided for long, without interfering with ordinary labour, being chiefly stone raising and breaking, or road making where possible.

ate of district nerally.

The workhouses in the larger unions of South Wales are full, but not to any very serious extent, and the amount of relief is not much in excess of this time last year. No doubt the new Boards of Guardians have been increasing outdoor relief, but this had already commenced before the exceptionally hard weather set in. There is, no doubt, widespread poverty, aggravated in South Wales by the intense depression of the tin plate trade, whilst in the larger centres of population the building trade, being entirely at a standstill, affects acutely a large number of the labouring classes. The collieries are, however, fairly employed, and this means a great deal. In other parts of Wales the same thing exists, if on a smaller scale. Flannel works, and many other small factories, are doing little or nothing; the quarries in North Wales have been idle for some three weeks, while the closing of the large chemical works at Flint has caused much distress there. The workhouses in North and Central Wales are small, and but little used, and, with the exception of Wrexham, not overcrowded.

haritab'e lort».

The almost unexampled severity of the weather has evoked a great deal of charity everywhere in the district, and this is now for the most part being organised in a comprehensive and intelligent manner in nearly every locality. Reports reach me which encourage me to state that in my opinion women and children are being fed, in some places clothed and supplied with fuel, throughout the district. There need, at all events, be no anxiety for the pauper class, or the professional poor, who make their wants heard readily enough, and are in many places probably reaping a harvest. The quiet sufferers are the most difficult to get at, but still, I think, in all the larger centres of population, at all events, successful efforts are being made in this direction. Such weather as we are having appeals to everyone, and opens the pockets of hundreds who at other times never trouble themselves about their poorer neighbours. I am much more anxious, when all this exceptional weather and consequent charity are passed, about those districts in which the tin-plate trade is the staple industry, for their future is gloomy indeed.

In a few weeks at least we may expect open weather, and up till then I have no doubt the efforts of organised charity will be found able to meet the distress which is consequent on the exceptional season.

As to the purely agricultural parts of Wales, the population is much scattered, and each parish has to look after the few that may be dependent on them. The casual agricultural labourer forms, however, but a very small class in Wales. I hear from many sources that their claims are being attended to quickly, but it would be impossible to furnish details. In these out-of-the-way districts the value of the resident clergyman is most recognisable in times like the present, for there are scores of parishes where there is no resident minister of any other denomination.

s to Orders of oard regula- ng relief to ble-bodied.

I have nothing to suggest in the shape of altering or temporarily modifying the requirements of the Outdoor Labour Test Order, under which any of the unions in my district requiring it act. It has not, as I have already stated, been put into operation to any appreciable extent, and this must be attributable in a great degree to the widespread development of charity, and in some degree to the employment found by Urban and Rural District Authorities.

Yours, &c.
(signed) *F. T. Bircham.*

Counties in District.
Bedford.
Cambridge.
[Except Wisbech.]
Herts.
Hunts.
Middlesex.
[Edmonton and Hendon.]
Northampton.

Sir, 16 February 1895.

In reply to your letter of the 13th instant, requesting me to furnish, for the information of the President, a report as to the extent of destitution amongst able-bodied men in this district in consequence of their being out of work, and the measures which have been taken by the Guardians with a view of affording relief in such cases, I have the honour to inform you that out of the 44 unions in this district there were until recently but 12 unions in which there was any material increase in the number of recipients of outdoor relief as compared with the corresponding week of last year, the increase varying from 357 in Edmonton to 30 in Linton. In 12 other unions the numbers corresponded nearly with those of last year until within the last three weeks, when a slight increase has taken place. In the remaining 20 the numbers are still lower than at the corresponding week of last year.

In the short time allowed for a reply it has been impossible to obtain accurate information as to the number of men out of work during the last fortnight. When the severity of the weather has been exceptional and practically put a stop to all outdoor work except the removal of snow, the carrying of water, &c., &c., there must necessarily exist considerable distress and suffering amongst the labouring population.

The largest numbers of men out of employment are to be found in the Barnet, Edmonton, Watford, Northampton, Bedford, Newmarket, and Wellingboro' Unions, but, so far as I have been able to learn, the Local Authorities, in conjunction with the Guardians, are taking every step in their power to give such employment as can be found, and relief without, where necessary. The circulars of 11th February to Town and District Councils issued by the Board are receiving every attention.

At Barnet the labour yard was opened for able-bodied on the 17th of January. At Watford men have been employed in the gravel pits adjoining the workhouse. At Northampton a few men are being relieved under the Outdoor Labour Test Order.

It appears to me unadvisable that any alteration in the Regulations of the Board with regard to outdoor relief should be made at the present time.

With the exception of two unions, Barnet and Berkhampsted, where the Guardians have but one relieving officer, I am not aware of any union in which the staff may be considered inadequate, and the Guardians unable to deal effectively with cases of destitution that may arise in their districts.

I am, &c.
(signed) *W. A. Peel.*

Sir Hugh Owen, K.C.B., &c., &c.

Dear Sir Hugh Owen, 17, Victoria-avenue, Harrogate, 16 February 1895.

Counties in District.

York, E.R.
[All.]
York, W.R.
[All, except Sedburgh a Todmorden (which are in M Jenner Fust's district).]

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 13th February, which reached me on the morning of the 14th instant, asking for a Report, based on such information as may be in my possession, on the extent to which distress and want of employment may be making themselves felt in my district.

On receipt of your communication I at once wrote to the 43 Clerks to the Unions which form my district, and set to work to tabulate some statistics, and collect information from other sources.

I regret that owing to the shortness of the notice, and to the necessity of immediately furnishing the information, I am not able to supply you with anything except incomplete particulars.

I annex a Return (A.), showing approximately how the pauperism indoor and outdoor stood during the first weeks in February 1894 and 1895. From this Return it will be gathered that there has been some, but not a very considerable increase in both classes of paupers, as compared with last year. I wish to point out, however, that, so far as I can judge, the general tendency during the past five or six years has been in favour of giving outdoor relief; and consequently the outdoor relief lists have, by steady annual increments, been growing. As the outdoor relief list creeps up so proportionately the need for increased indoor accommodation makes itself felt; and I therefore hardly like to go so far as to say that the tabular statement bears witness to an abnormal increase of destitution. When the severe frost sets in many of those who have been struggling to keep outside on a weekly pittance find themselves forced to take refuge inside, and thus the larger workhouses, at any rate, are at the present time getting very full; many are overcrowded.

The unusually prolonged frost must, I think, beyond a doubt have caused a great deal of distress all over Yorkshire; but I annex a Return (B.), which goes to show that, except in Bradford, no very excessive numbers of able-bodied men have in consequence been compelled to accept relief from the rates. On the other hand, the Return seems to show that a very large number of able-bodied men—presumably single men—have been driven to the shelter of the house.

The Bradford distress is due rather to bad trade than to frosty weather.

Rotherham has never recovered from the effects of the lock-out in the coal trade of 1893.

Penistone varies a good deal from time to time, according as the Steel Works are working full or half time.

I annex printed extracts from some local newspapers which both throw some light upon the state of things in Yorkshire, and show that great efforts are being made, by charitable subscriptions and otherwise, to tide over the evil days.

Beyond a doubt the severe weather and its long continuance must have caused great distress, and thrown many persons out of work—gardeners, bricklayers, and outdoor labourers obviously; but the effects of continued and severe frost operate indirectly as well as by direct means. Thus, in some way the gas at a mill may get frozen, and the mill may have to run short time till a thaw sets in; the postponement of race meetings or football matches must mean a loss to many who depend upon casual earnings; and when the more monied classes cease to move about, awaiting finer weather, cab drivers and omnibus keepers find their sources of income fall off. The above are only a small sample of the many different ways in which prolonged frost may throw people into distress.

Per contra, of course, the plumbers are having a very good time, and there is a good deal to be earned by those who sweep up snow, and something by those who fit on skates, &c.

In spite of the handsome way in which money, soup, bread, clothes, &c., are provided in the various localities to cope with the distress, I confess to feeling a great deal of misgiving as to how far the money, the soup, and the clothes, reach the really deserving poor. I cannot help suspecting that in times such as these, where stoppages of work occur, much distress is borne in silence, and is unassisted, particularly among wives and children, while the Mayors' funds and the soup kitchens may be largely exploited by a class much less deserving, but much more self-asserting and clamorous; by men who sell cards at racecourses, and who are familiar with tramp wards. One or two thrushes and blackbirds have lately been moping on a tree outside my house, and I should like to help them; but the crumbs I scatter for their benefit are for the most part intercepted by proletariat, corduroyed sparrows.

I have tried in a Return (C.) annexed to see how far it may be the case that when very severe weather sets in the vagrants remain in the large towns, and there swell the ranks of the "unemployed"; to test this I took the average number of vagrants at each workhouse the year through, and compared with this the average of the six weeks ending on 10th February or thereabouts; but all the Return shows is that in severe weather the tramps move about much less; in other words, there ought to have been 3,679 cases in which male vagrants were relieved during the six weeks, whereas the real number was 2,608.

I may add that, so far as I am aware, in a time like the present, when funds are being got together, and when the charitable wish to reach the really necessitous, the large employers whose hands may be temporarily thrown out of work do not furnish the charitable associations (as they readily might do) with lists of the families who, as a consequence of the stoppage, are in need of help, or likely to be in need of it.

I have had it lately stated to me by the Chairman of the Hull Board of Guardians, who is also a trustee of the Hull Savings Bank, that the largest number of deposits are made in the Savings Bank during these periods of severe distress. The conjectural explanation of this is that only in times when the pinch of poverty begins to make itself felt do the heads of households begin to think about providing for a "rainy day."

Stoneyards are usually opened by the Sheffield Guardians in the winter.

Halifax has opened a stoneyard lately for able-bodied men who have been turned out of the workhouse.

The Bradford stoneyard has been open for several years past.

The Rotherham stoneyard, since the coal lock-out.

Ecclesall Bierlow has always some men on outdoor test-labour.

The Huddersfield Guardians keep men on outdoor test-labour all the year round.

As to any temporary modifications of the regulations of the Board with regard to outdoor relief in the case of able-bodied men who are out of work, in my opinion the present circumstances are not so exceptional as to render such modifications necessary; there is, I believe, much distress, but I believe, also, that the efforts of the charitable are sufficiently co-operating with the Boards of Guardians to enable that distress to be met, and, indeed, anything like the grant of aid from the rates indiscriminately to able-bodied persons who may be in necessitous circumstances would be a measure that I should personally view with the gravest alarm.

I am, &c.
(signed) *H. G. Kennedy.*

To Sir Hugh Owen,
Secretary to the Local Government Board.

(A.)

NUMBER of Indoor and Outdoor Paupers from last Returns (1st week of February 1895) and corresponding Week last Year.

UNIONS.	1st Week of February, 1895.			Corresponding Week of 1894.			Increase.	Decrease.
	Indoor.	Outdoor.	Total.	Indoor.	Outdoor.	Total.		
EAST RIDING:								
Beverley	94	660	754	104	649	753	1	—
Bridlington	34	374	408	28	368	396	12	—
Driffield	104	557	661	82	530	612	49	—
Howden	64	329	393	65	310	375	18	—
Kingston-on-Hull	772	2,454	3,226	693	1,973	2,666	560	—
Partington	47	165	212	45	163	208	4	—
Pocklington	52	422	474	36	454	490	—	16
Sculcoates	584	3,448	4,032	528	3,020	3,548	484	—
Skirlaugh	36	256	292	42	209	251	41	—
York	593	1,086	1,679	586	1,058	1,644	35	—
TOTAL East Riding	2,380	9,751	12,131	2,209	8,734	10,943	1,204	16
WEST RIDING:								
Barnsley*	363	1,290	1,653	364	1,518	1,882	—	229
North Brerley	274	1,837	2,111	246	1,881	2,127	—	16
Bradford	954	2,540	3,494	951	2,282	3,233	261	—
Bramley	194	818	1,012	160	712	872	140	—
Dewsbury*	411	1,898	2,309	366	1,896	2,262	47	—
Doncaster*	297	1,160	1,457	301	1,094	1,395	62	—
Ecclesall Bierlow	630	1,154	1,784	609	1,220	1,829	—	45
Goole	117	582	699	114	585	699	—	—
Halifax	637	2,887	3,524	530	2,735	3,265	259	—
Hemsworth	57	297	354	57	282	339	15	—
Holbeck	81	376	457	77	290	367	90	—
Huddersfield	560	2,245	2,805	551	2,082	2,633	172	—
Hunslet	260	1,213	1,473	264	1,200	1,464	9	—
Keighley	265	735	1,000	225	661	886	114	—
Knaresborough	96	616	712	58	647	705	7	—
Leeds	1,312	3,969	5,281	1,246	3,564	4,810	471	—
Great Ouseburn	58	111	169	55	132	187	—	18
Pateley Bridge	23	83	106	18	113	131	—	25
Penistone*	65	423	488	70	353	423	65	—
Pontefract†	169	1,288	1,457	162	1,211	1,373	84	—
Ripon*	78	249	327	82	342	424	—	97
Rotherham	424	2,309	2,733	379	1,920	2,299	434	—
Saddleworth	68	258	326	75	148	223	3	—
Selby	75	246	321	80	242	322	—	1
Settle	32	197	229	44	159	203	26	—
Sheffield	1,803	3,030	4,833	1,672	3,111	4,783	50	—
Skipton	90	543	633	65	467	532	101	—
Tadcaster	116	325	441	105	285	390	51	—
Thorne*	82	381	463	78	334	412	51	—
Wakefield	283	1,944	2,227	248	2,008	2,256	—	29
Wetherby	50	288	338	47	264	311	27	—
Wharfedale	82	525	607	74	529	603	4	—
Wortley*	133	650	783	133	586	719	64	—
TOTAL West Riding	10,139	36,467	46,606	9,506	34,853	44,359	2,497	460
TOTAL DISTRICT	12,519	46,218	58,737	11,715	43,587	55,302	3,701	476

* Latest Returns last weeks in January.
† The last Return for Pontefract is for week ending 29th December 1894.

(B.)

NUMBER of Able-bodied Men in the Workhouse, and on Outdoor Test Labour.

UNIONS.	Number of Able-bodied Men in the Workhouse.	Corresponding Week last Year.	Number of Men on Outdoor Test Labour.	Corresponding Week of last Year.
EAST RIDING:				
Beverley	3	5	—	—
Bridlington	—	—	—	—
Driffield	17	4	—	—
Howden	—	—	—	—
Kingston-on-Hull	43	25	32	12
Patrington	—	—	—	—
Pocklington	13	12	—	—
Sculcoates	16	21	23	5
Skirlaugh	—	—	—	—
York	22	Not stated	29	22
WEST RIDING:				
Barnsley	5	2	—	—
North Brierley	24	19	—	—
Bradford	79	Not stated	254	50
Bramley	11	9	6	7
Dewsbury	35	Not stated	13	3
Doncaster	3	—	—	—
Ecclesall Bierlow	8	24	31	22
Goole	—	—	—	—
Halifax	62	50	—	—
Hemsworth	1	1	—	—
Holbeck	12	15	5	4
Huddersfield	18	5	53	38
Hunslet	14	8	11	6
Keighley	7	Not stated	15	10
Knaresborough	6	4	—	—
Leeds	14	11	24	15
Great Ouseburn	? 0	? 0	Not stated	? 0 (From Form A.)
Pateley Bridge	3	2	—	—
Penistone	6	5	16	—
Pontefract	32	19	—	—
Ripon	2	1	—	—
Rotherham	30	Not stated	176	89
Saddleworth	6	11	Not stated	? 0 (From Form A.)
Selby	3	7	—	—
Settle	3	4	1	—
Sheffield	300	Not stated	21	70
Skipton	—	2	2	3
Tadcaster	—	—	—	—
Thorne	—	—	—	—
Wakefield	9	9	—	—
Wetherby	—	—	—	—
Wharfedale	—	—	—	—
Wortley	—	—	2	—
TOTAL	801	264	714	356

(C.)

UNIONS.	Average Weekly Number of Male Vagrants for 52 Weeks—Year ending at March 1894.	Average for Six Weeks by last Returns, February 1895.
EAST RIDING:		
Beverley	107	85
Bridlington	74	52
Driffield	64	51
Howden	41	31
Kingston-on-Hull	104	77
Patrington	15	14
Pocklington	106	50
Sculcoates	74	60
Skirlaugh	63	49
York	176	134
	824	603
WEST RIDING:		
Barnsley	63	54
North Brierley	No returns.	
Bradford	146	87
Bramley	51	56
Dewsbury	117	91
Doncaster	67	30
Ecclesall Bierlow	131	126
Goole	57	36
Halifax	252	205
Hemsworth	39	36
Holbeck	41	32
Huddersfield	77	49
WEST RIDING—*continued.*		
Hunslet	96	106
Keighley	94	54
Knaresborough	53	56
Leeds	134	76
Great Ouseburn	38	23
Pateley Bridge	72	32
Penistone	84	46
Pontefract	155	Not stated.
Ripon	93	87
Rotherham	49	60
Saddleworth	110	43
Selby	110	74
Settle	57	41
Sheffield	102	116
Skipton	83	50
Tadcaster	120	85
Thorne	40	17
Wakefield	142	119
Wetherby	81	72
Wharfedale	71	17
Wortley	30	29
	2,855	2,005
	3,679	2,608

The Relief of Distress.—Arrangements in Leeds.

The Central Relief Committee again met in the Mayor's Rooms at the Leeds Town Hall yesterday afternoon, under the presidency of his Worship (Alderman Gilston). It was reported by the Town Clerk (Mr. John Harrison) that the contributions to the central fund had reached considerably over 3,000*l.* besides many gifts "in kind" in addition to those already reported, including three dozen woollen rugs and blankets from Messrs. Nettleton Bros. and Co., and fifty stones of flour and quarter pounds of yeast from Mr. Thomas Naylor, grocer, Victoria-road, Leeds. Further grants to the amount of over 500*l.* were made to several ward organisations. Only among such organisations will the Central Committee distribute its resources, and in future no money grants will be made unless for a special purpose to be approved by the Central Committee. The grants will take the form of tickets for coals, groceries, and other necessaries, and these tickets, which will be honoured by tradesmen in various parts of the city, are now being issued by the Central Committee to the Ward Committees. So promptly and thoroughly has the work of the committee been carried out that every ward has now been organised for relief purposes. At yesterday's meeting the suits and overcoats given by Messrs. Rhodes and Co. were allocated among all the wards. It was reported that Herr Julius Seeth, the animal trainer who is giving entertainments at the Coliseum, has arranged a special performance for Friday afternoon in aid of the relief fund, and it was decided that the patronage of the Mayor and Central Committee should be extended to the event. It may be mentioned that the committee have already granted over a third of the amount that has been contributed, and as under any circumstances the drain on the fund must be heavy and continuous, further help is needed. We are requested to say that owing to a clerical error the contribution of the Kirkstall Brewery Company was stated in yesterday's list at 5*l.* instead of 25*l.* The firm of Messrs. Wm. Paul (Limited) have subscribed 25*l.* in addition to a similar sum contributed by Mr. Wm. Paul personally. The committee will meet again this afternoon.

It is evident that the unemployed are appreciating the efforts that the Central Relief Committee and the various Ward Committees are making to meet the wants of those who are in distress. The visit of a couple of hundred men to the Mayor's residence on Monday night is regarded by the most sensible of the out-of-works as a mistake. It was against the expressed wishes of some of the leaders that the expedition was undertaken, and those who took part in it were seriously taken to task by one or two of the speakers at yesterday morning's meeting of the unemployed in the crypt of the Town Hall. Nothing but discredit, it was pointed out, could be brought upon their cause by such tactics at a time when the Mayor and those associated with him are attempting to cope with the distress that prevails. The meeting in the crypt, at which Mr. Burniston presided, was very largely attended, and the proceedings throughout were of an ordinary character. Dissatisfaction was again expressed at the regulation of the Relief Committee that single men living in common lodging houses are not to receive help—a rule which, it was shown, was a great hardship upon many young fellows who, having no home, regularly live in lodging houses. A resolution was passed appointing a deputation to wait upon the Committee to ask for a modification of this regulation. Before the meeting was over it was stated that the Mayor had explained that the rule was intended only to apply to tramps. Satisfied with this explanation, the meeting agreed to withdraw the resolution appointing the deputation. Allusion was made to the intimation that in order to obtain help the men must apply to the Ward Committees, and a resolution was adopted expressing the necessity for immediate relief. The fact that assistance could only be procured through the Ward Committees was impressed upon the men by a placard posted outside the Town Hall, setting forth the places and times at which the various committees would meet last evening. At a meeting of the Corporate Property Committee of the City Council yesterday the following resolution was adopted:—"That having regard to the fact that arrangements have been made for dealing with questions connected with the unemployed and the distribution of funds in the several wards, the permission to the unemployed to hold daily meetings in the crypt of the Town Hall be withdrawn after the meeting to-morrow (Wednesday)." It was reported that since the work of preserving the ruins of Kirkstall Abbey commenced the sum of 12,314*l.* had been expended, and that much of this amount had gone in wages to men who would otherwise have been out of work. A plan for a suggested lake on Woodhouse Moor was once more laid before the committee. The area which it was thought might be covered with

with water was about 4,290 square yards, the estimated outlay being about 1,534*l*. The Committee decided not to carry out the project at present. The City Accountant and the City Engineer were instructed to prepare a return showing the total sum paid in wages by the Corporation to men out of work in the city during the last three years.

A number of ward meetings were held yesterday, and most of the ward committees met for the distribution of relief. A large number of ratepayers and residents in the North Ward attended a meeting in St. John the Baptist's Mission Hall, Newtown, convened by the councillors and other representatives of the ward on public bodies. The Rev. L. A. Drakeford-Lewis (vicar of the parish) was voted to the chair. A representative committee was appointed, Mr. E. E. Lawson being elected chairman, Mr. E. Hayward vice-chairman, and Councillor Beaumont secretary and representative on the Central Committee. Councillor Beaumont mentioned that he had received from the Central Committee tickets for the supply of food, and tickets of the value of 17*l*. had already been distributed to 130 or 140 residents in the ward. The Central Committee had decided to grant tickets to the ward up to 30*l*. this week, and had promised articles of clothing. On the motion of Councillor Wilson, seconded by Mr. E. Hayward, a cordial vote of thanks was awarded to the Mayor for his promptitude in taking steps to meet the distress. About 50*l*. was promised in the room towards the Central Fund, the sums varying from 5*l*. to 5*s*.

With the object of arranging for the relief of the distress which prevails in the North-East Ward, a meeting was called last night in the Miners' Institute, York-road. The fact that the meeting was to be held having come to the ears of the unemployed, of whom there are undoubtedly large numbers in the ward, the Institute was besieged long before the hour fixed for the commencement of the proceedings by a surging crowd of "out-of-works," and it was thought advisable under the circumstances to throw the place open to them. The result was that the interior of the building was quickly filled, and instead of organising a committee, the promoters of the meeting found it necessary to at once proceed with the distribution of relief. Of the names previously taken at the Town Hall, 600 were those of men residing in the ward, and about 150 additional ones were handed in last night. A sum of 25*l*. had been granted by the Central Committee to the North-East Ward, and tickets representing this amount were quickly distributed among the most deserving cases. The remainder of the applicants were informed that they would receive consideration to-day, when it is hoped a further grant will have been obtained. During the evening a large and representative committee was enrolled to carry on the work, the members including Councillor Sidney Smith (chairman), Alderman Walker, Councillors Levitt and Batley, and the Revs. T. E. Jameson (St. Stephen's), W. H. Stansfield (St. Agnes, Burmantofts), T. J. Hamerton (St. Alban's), J. Anderson (Congregational), W. Dudley (Primitive Methodist), C. Riseborough (Baptist), and J. T. Oliver (Methodist New Connexion).

At a meeting in the Mill Hill Ward, presided over by Councillor Tweedale, a committee for the relief of the distress was formed with Alderman North as chairman, and Mr. W. B. Clark and Mr. Tom Child as hon. secretaries. Besides Councillor Tweedale, Councillor Gordon was present, with Mr. James Wilson, Mr. R. Hopps, Mr. R. A. Smithson, and others. Councillor Willey was prevented from attending by indisposition.

The fund established in connection with the licensed trade now amounts to over 300*l*. The committee having charge of it yesterday distributed 900 loaves of bread, 300 gallons of soup, and tickets for 10 tons of coal were distributed. In the West End district tickets were given away representing 20 sacks of flour and 10 tons of coal. To-day it is the intention of the committee to distribute in the East End district tickets for 30 tons of coals, and 260 1*s*. 4*d*. tickets for provisions. In the North-street district to-day 200 gallons of soup and 1,000 loaves are to be given away, while in the Meanwood district tickets representing 10 tons of coals and 200 sacks of flour will be distributed. Among the gentlemen who have taken an active part in the benevolent work are Mr. Alfred Redmayne, Mr. George Wood, and Mr. H. A. Sanderson. At a meeting of the Leeds Off-Licence Holders' Association, last night, it was suggested that the members of the society should subscribe to the relief fund. It was explained, however, that the movement of the innkeepers included the entire trade, that many off-licence holders had subscribed to the fund independently, that many holders of off-licences were suffering seriously from the effects of the prevailing distress, and that all who wished to render help to the poor might assist the benevolent efforts of the licensed victuallers. For these reasons a separate subscription list was not started.

Mr. Charles Stott, of Hall-lane, Armley, has arranged to give 250 loaves of bread and 250 2oz. packets of tea to the deserving poor of Armley. Applications should be made to the following tradesmen: Mr. B. Wainman, Moor Side, Armley; Mr. Dennison, Theaker-lane, Armley; Mr. Wilson, City Stores, Whingate; Mr. Charles Hepworth, Hall-lane, Armley; and Mr. Charles Hepworth, Armley-road.

Mr. Dunford, of the City Varieties, has consented to give a free and full benefit for the Licensed Trades Distress Fund, on Wednesday the 21st instant.

Mr. Mahon, in reference to a statement about single men having been left without relief on Monday night, writes that he was able through the generosity of a few licensed victuallers to find beds and breakfasts for 20 of them.

The first distribution of soup and loaves was made by the Bramley Conservative Association yesterday, when 160 quartern loaves and 80 gallons of substantial soup were given away. Another distribution will be made on Friday at the same hour.

The Organisation of Relief in Bradford.

The whole of the relief organisations in Bradford are now in full swing, and in addition to the work of the various philanthropic organisations of the town the licensed victuallers and many tradesmen are doing yeoman service in the way of distributing food and soup. The efforts of the Bradford Cinderella Club are particularly praiseworthy and well-timed, and in addition to the clothing of many hundreds of ill-clad children (a work in which they are in urgent need of further assistance), they have daily throughout the severe weather fed a constantly increasing number of starving children, until yesterday relief was distributed in this form to upwards of 1,000 youngsters. The Mayor's Relief Fund Committee met yesterday at the Town Hall, under the presidency of his Worship (Alderman W. Willis Wood). There was a large attendance, and on the motion of Mr. Robert Pratt, seconded by the Ven. Archdeacon Bardsley, it was resolved to distribute relief in kind, and not in money, full power being given to make grants of money to any organisation capable of carrying on relief work. Sub-committees were afterwards organised for every ward in the town, and were allotted first grants of amounts varying from 15*l*. to 20*l*., and in some cases of 10*l*. where the distress was thought to be not so acute. Mr. H. B. Priestman moved, and Mr. M. O'Flynn seconded, a motion for the payment to all the elementary schools in the town of a sum of 20*s*. each to meet urgent wants in providing meals for poor children. This was carried. The total subscription up to six o'clock last night to the Mayoral fund amounted to 689*l*.

Relief Works started in Blackburn.

Relief works were started yesterday by the Blackburn Corporation, upon which as many unemployed as possible will be engaged in day shifts. The Mayor yesterday received 100*l*. from Councillor Nuttall, 50*l*. from Mr. George Whiteley, of Blackburn, M.P. for Stockport, and other handsome donations to the relief fund, which now reaches nearly 1,000*l*. In view of the exceptional distress the various operatives' societies in the town have been asked by the Corporation to contribute from their finances to the Mayor's Relief Fund.

Mr. W. Allan (Gateshead), Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. W. Fowler, Mr. Richardson, and one or two other northern M.P.'s saw Mr. Shaw-Lefevre in his private room at the House of Commons last night with a view to the introduction by the Government of a short Bill to prevent people who accept poor law relief during the present period of distress from being disfranchished. The President of the Local Government Board promised to make a statement on the subject to-day.

Barnsley.

Yesterday the Mayor (Alderman Woodcock) issued a public appeal for subscription to the relief fund. The committee met yesterday and agreed to distribute in kind at the rate of 2*s*. for a single man, 2*s*. 6*d*. for a man and

his wife, and 6*s.* for each child under 12 years of age. An active committee are seeking subscriptions, and the committee could not exceed the amounts named with the funds in hand.

Calverley.

At the meeting of the Calverley District Council last night, a letter was read from Mr. G. H. Crowther stating that Mr. Clarke-Thornhill would give 10 tons of coal to be distributed amongst the deserving poor of the village, and a hearty vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Thornhill.

Castleford.

Yesterday afternoon the weekly meeting of the Castleford Relief Committee was held in the Assembly Rooms. Extra donations were reported as follows :—Boxes, 18*l.* ; Mr. Lee, 5*l.* ; Messrs. H. Briggs & Co., 3*l.* 3*s.* ; Beverley Brothers, 2*l.* ; making a total in hand of 150*l.* A truck of coal had also been given from the Fryston Colliery. Relief was granted to the 300 cases on the books at the rate of 2*s.* per adult and 6*d.* per child.

Huddersfield.

About 260 persons of all ages were provided with a good meal of soup and bread, and another 100 with coffee and bread and cheese, at the police fire brigade station on Monday night. There was again a distribution of soup and bread to a large number of the poor yesterday. Sir J. W. Ramsden, through his agent (Mr F. W. Beadon), has made arrangements for giving 25 tons of coal, in lots of two or three hundredweights each, to the poor. The total amount subscribed up to Monday night to the fund opened at the meeting in the Town Hall on Friday is 42*l.* 19*s.* 2*d.*

Pontefract.

Last night a meeting was held at the Town Hall, Pontefract, convened by the Mayor (Alderman Grandidge) and presided over by him, to consider the distress in the town. There was a large attendance. It was remarked that the distress in the town was not so acute as in many places. Subscriptions to the amount of about 60*l.* were promised, including 10*l.* from Mr. Fitzalan Hope.

Pudsey.

Soup was distributed yesterday to the poorer children attending the Rickardshaw-lane, Greenside, and Littlemoor Board Schools, and similar relief will be distributed to-day to 200 adults.

Relief at Pateley Bridge.

The whole of the men engaged at the Pateley Bridge stone quarries, or in outdoor work of any kind, and also the navvies engaged at the Bradford Waterworks, are thrown out of employment by the severe frost, many of them having done nothing since Christmas. However, through the liberality of the gentry in the town and neighbourhood the wants of every needy case have been met. An influential committee was formed a fortnight ago, and a sub-committee, consisting of the clergy and ministers, with the Vicar (the Rev. A. Scott) as chairman, meets regularly to inquire into the merits of each case daily at one or other of the schools in the town. Soup and bread are distributed, and also 2 cwt. of coal weekly to every household requiring it. Thus every family in the parish, it is believed, has a fire, and at least one good meal daily. All the denominations in the town work harmoniously together in support of the general committee. The distribution is thus regular and systematic.

THE DISTRESS.—Relief Measures in Leeds.

In every ward of Leeds committees are now at work supplementing the efforts of the Central organisation in relieving the wants of the needy. Some difficulty has arisen in certain cases in distributing the relief, and the committees have not always been able to deal satisfactorily with all the cases that have claimed attention. Some of these instances were brought before the Central Committee at its meeting in the Mayor's Rooms at the Town Hall yesterday, and it was explained that the difficulties were due chiefly to the great number of applicants, or, as was the case at one place at least, to a too demonstrative eagerness to claim relief. The total amount subscribed to the relief fund when the Committee met yesterday was 3,475*l.*, but before the day was over the sum had been increased to 3,669*l.*, the most recent contributions including 100*l.* from the Leeds Industrial Co-operative Society, 50*l.* from Messrs. Taylor Bros. & Co., 50*l.* from Messrs. Joshua Wilson & Son (Limited), 25*l.* each from Councillor Gordon, Messrs. Samuel Kirk and Sons, students of the Yorkshire College, Messrs. J. Fowler and Co. (Limited), Messrs. E. Maude & Sons, Messrs. William Paul (Limited), Mr. Thomas Pawson, and Messrs. Thomas Pawson & Sons ; and 20*l.* each from Mr. Robert Ingham, Mr. George March, and Mr. Thomas Nussey. Besides the additional money gifts, the Committee have had further offers of "goods," including 50 tons of coal from the Middleton Colliery Company, 400 boys fancy caps from Messrs. E. Kinghorn and Co., wholesale cap manufacturers, Castle-street, and 46 Cardigan jackets from Mr. W. H. Varey, of 122, Kirkstall-road. Arrangements were made for the distribution of coal and the articles of wearing apparel named. A further sum of 12*l.* 10*s.*, making altogether 62*l.* 10*s.*, was granted to the School Board, who by this means are enabled to provide one free meal a day to about 2,600 poor school children. It was mentioned to the Committee that the school teachers throughout the city are cheerfully co-operating in the work of relieving the distress. The Central Committee will meet each week-day at three o'clock in the afternoon, excepting on Saturdays, when their meetings will begin at eleven o'clock.

Through the agency of the Ward Committees, and by the generosity of various organisations and private individuals, some thousands of people who would otherwise be hungry are being fed, and many homes that would be cold and desolate are cheered by warm fires. The East Hunslet Relief Committee relieved 135 cases on Tuesday night, many of them extremely necessitous, and all in need of immediate relief tickets for groceries of from 1*s.* to 2*s.* in value being given. The old Salvation Army Barracks have been lent to the committee by the present occupant for their use during the distress. To-night the committee intend to distribute clothing, coals, and coke ; and to-morrow tickets for groceries and provisions.

A numerously-attended meeting, convened by the aldermen and councillors of the Headingley Ward, was held in the Burley Lawn School. Mr. Lowden, who presided, explained that the main purpose of the meeting was to appoint a committee to control and distribute all relief received from the Central Committee, and to relieve urgent cases that evening, if possible. On the motion of Councillor Irwin, seconded by Councillor Boston, a committee was appointed, and, acting on the suggestion of the Rev. J. Legge and the Rev. G. Eayrs, it was decided that the committee should remain to distribute relief at the close of the meeting, and that it should meet every evening. These resolutions have been carried out, and a large number of poor people have been assisted in one way or another.

A large and representative meeting of clergymen, ministers of all denominations, the councillors and guardians of the ward, tradespeople, and others in the South Ward, was held on Tuesday noon at the Church House, Meadow-Lane. Mr. F. W. Walker was elected chairman, Mr. G. W. Harrison, treasurer, and Mr. John Vickers, secretary, with a strong committee. The Chairman handed over 25*l.*, which was at once given out, and the members quickly proceeded with its distribution. In the evening the committee again met in St. Jude's Schoolroom, Mr. Walker again presiding. Tickets were given out to the committee for provisions, coal, and coke. Over 200 people were waiting at the door. A deputation went to see them, and eventually it was decided to issue tickets to the value of one shilling each. This was done, and the tickets were distributed. The Committee are taking immediate steps to visit every part of the ward, and are sitting nightly to receive reports and to take prompt action in every case.

Several

Several hundred families again benefited yesterday by the system of relief organised by the licensed trades of Leeds. About a thousand loaves and 250 gallons of soup were distributed at the Club in Vulcan-street, off North-street, the recipients being chiefly the poorer residents in the localities of Barracks-street and Newtown. In the Meanwood district, tickets representing 200 sacks of flour and 10 tons of coal were given out. To-day there will be a distribution of 1,000 loaves and 200 gallons of soup in the neighbourhood of West-street; and tickets for provisions to the number of 660, each of the value of 1*s.*, will be given in the Armley district. Mr. T. P. Webster, secretary to the fund, yesterday received an intimation from Mr. C. Weldon, manager of the Princess Palace, that he will be pleased to give a benefit performance on behalf of the fund, the date of which will be duly announced.

Mr. Walter Reynolds, the lessee of the Theatre Royal, and other gentlemen, have made arrangements for supplying 1,000 quarts of soup at the door of that house of entertainment in Land's-lane on Saturday morning, commencing at 10 o'clock in the morning. Tickets will be placed in the hands of the various relief committees for distribution this morning; 500 children will be admitted to Saturday afternoon's performance of the pantomime, and the youngest will have tickets which will secure for them a bun each on entering the theatre and a loaf of bread on leaving. The members and friends of the Bramley Co-operative Stores are distributing 400 2-lb. loaves of bread to the poor of Bramley this week.

Entertainments at several places of amusement in the city in aid of the distressed poor are announced. As already intimated a special morning performance of the Grand Theatre pantomime will be given on Thursday next the 21st inst. The *matinée* will be under the patronage of the Mayor and members of the City Council, and the entire proceeds, without any deduction whatever, will be handed over to the Central Relief Fund, all the artistes and employés having volunteered their services and Mr. Wilson Barrett having granted the use of the theatre without charge. Tickets for the *matinée* at the Coliseum to-morrow, already announced, may be obtained from members of the ward committees. Herr Julius Seeth has agreed to devote all the proceeds to the distress fund.

The Executive Committee of the Distress fund organised by the Leeds teachers wish to thank those who so kindly responded to their appeal for money, boots, or clothes for under-clad starving scholars, and they make an appeal for further help; 10*s.*, they remind the public, means, in the hands of the teachers, 120 dinners to the starving; 6*d.* provides a child with dinners for a week. The total amount received by the committee so far is 10*l.* 15*s.* 6*d.*, including 2*l.* 2*s.* from Mr. Hepper; 1*l.* 1*s.* from Mr. Peaker, the teachers' representative on the School Board; 1*l.* from "B. S." Harrogate; 1*l.* from Mr. E. Ramsden, and 2*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.* from the teachers of Sweet-street School. Parcels of clothing and boots have also been received. Miss Hannah Frost, Lincoln Fields, East Leeds, desires to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of parcels of clothing for the poor of that district.

The committee of the Armley Conservative Club are making arrangements for a soup distribution on three days of the week at Denison Hall. Over 13*l.* was raised amongst the officials and committee at the meeting which decided upon this praiseworthy action.

The license-holders of Armley and Wortley met yesterday morning at the Star Inn, Tong-road, to consider the question of having a joint relief fund. The Armley fund officials pointed out that they had already spent 13*l.* of the 23*l.* which had been raised since Saturday, and under those circumstances the Wortley people would not gain anything by joining them. The Wortley license-holders therefore decided upon a separate fund. Mr. P. Summerton and Mr. C. W. Ellison were appointed treasurer and secretary to the fund; 23*l.* 7*s.* was raised in the room, and steps were taken for making an immediate distribution of coals and food.

The decision of the Corporate Property Committee not to allow the unemployed to assemble in the Crypt of the Town Hall after yesterday provided the labour leaders with another topic for the exercise of their oratory at yesterday's meeting. It was declared that the Corporate Committee did not understand, or at any rate that they ignored the object of these gatherings, which, said Mr. Burniston were organised not for purposes of relief, but to force the unemployed problem on public attention, and to demand a wise, reasonable, just, and humane solution of that problem. It was mentioned that the Rev. S. Chadwick had intimated that if the men were not allowed to meet in the Crypt he would grant them the use of the Oxford-place Wesleyan Schoolroom. "Crypt or no Crypt," Mr. Burniston added, "come to-morrow morning, and if we cannot have the Crypt or Oxford-place Schoolwe will have Victoria-square."—A resolution was passed, and subsequently forwarded to the proper quarter, asking the Corporate Property Committee to reconsider its decision. Another grievance was set forth in the allegation that relief is not being administered by the Ward Committees as expeditiously as it ought to be, and that it is not being dealt out fairly. The chief exponent of this grievance was Mr. J. L. Mahon, who, while directing the charge specifically at the North-East Ward Committee, asserted that it was also applicable to other wards, a declaration that was answered by cries in which the names "East," "Holbeck," and other wards were distinguished. It was a ground of complaint that while some men received half-a-crown or three shillings others did not receive a penny, and that whereas some applicants were given two tickets for coal, others, like Mrs. Hubbard's poor dog, "had none." Mr. Mahon moved—"That this meeting calls the attention of the subscribers to the Mayor's Fund to the delay and disgracefully incompetent arrangements in distributing relief in the North-East Ward."—This proposition was agreed to. The following resolutions were passed at the Joint Unemployed Committee last night:—"That we recommend the Central Relief Committee to distribute their funds more generously in those wards where the distress is most felt." "That we view with horror and indignation the death from exposure and starvation in the city of Leeds."

The Distress at Halifax.

The poor whom the ratepayers of Halifax have specially with them at this trying season are largely composed of out-door labourers and their families. Quarrymen, for instance, form a big proportion of those in need, the severe winter having frozen all the sources upon which they have depended for the every-day employment that means bread and butter to them. Trade depression is stated to be only a minor cause of the unusual poverty that prevails. The carpet industry, indeed, shows signs of revival. It was, therefore, chiefly to meet the difficulties of those who are, in better weather, engaged in out-door employment that the Central Relief Committee (of which the Mayor, Alderman Michael Booth, is president) was instituted nearly a fortnight ago. Up to yesterday a sum of nearly 900*l.* had been paid into the fund—the exact amount was 861*l.* 3*s.* 3½*d.*—and in addition to this promises of about 100*l.* are recorded. Of the amount received about 620*l.* has been paid away in relief. The committee, which is representative of every party and sect in the town, met every day last week to allot "relief tickets" to the various ward committees for distribution among deserving persons, and are now meeting three days in the week for the same purpose. Yesterday they were able to announce the receipt of about 72*l.* in subscriptions, bringing the fund up to the amount already mentioned, and they apportioned a sum of 92*l.* 10*s.* in 1,850 shilling tickets, to the different wards. The sub-committees are constituted on the same lines as the Central Committee, and the members are entrusted with the duty of inquiring as far as possible into every application for relief before distributing the coupons. Each of these coupons, or tickets, entitles the holder to one shilling's worth of food or fuel at any shop, and not more than five of the tickets may be given to any one family in one day, the tickets being, of course, afterwards exchanged by the shopkeepers for cash at the Town Hall. This is the method of procedure, and so far it appears to have worked very well, notwithstanding that one or two cases of imposition have had to be brought under the notice of the Central Committee. One provision made in respect of the relief administration is that no lodger nor other person who cannot prove residence of a month shall be entitled to the bounty. The fact is that a very considerable number of the applicants constitute what Halifax calls its floating population—men who make the lodging-houses their home. In respect of this class, it has been agreed that, subject to conditions, the "relief tickets" may also be used in payment of lodgings. To give a precise, or even an approximate idea of the number of men out of work, and of the number of members of their families suffering, would be extremely difficult. It is thought that there are a thousand at least—a ninetieth of Halifax's population—but the number of tickets given out yesterday indicates that there are many more. The men, it was said, originally wanted work and not charity. The Corpora-

tion, however, have already apparently done what they can to find employment by giving away "orders" for clearing the snow from the streets, though, judging by the condition of one or two outlying places, it would seem that the operation has not been thoroughly successful. As an instance of the varied character of the "unemployed" who were engaged, it has been reported that some of the men disposed of their engagement tickets for the price of a pint of beer to others, who, more industrious, were willing thus to pay for the previlege of working for a temporary livelihood. Apart altogether from the Central Relief Fund are several benevolent movements in connection with certain religious, social, and commercial institutions in the borough. Quite a number of these independent charities are being carried on in a most quiet and unostentatious way; others, from the public urgency of the case, are the subject of general talk and admiration. The Cinderalla Club, for example, is taking a prominent part in acting as a medium for dispensing the necessities of life to old and young. Alderman Whitaker is giving breakfasts to the children attending Akroyd-place Board Schools. Messrs. John Crossley and Sons (Limited), who employ about 4,000 hands at their mills at Dean Clough, are distributing through the agency of the Central Committee 100 free tickets for soup every day; and in addition are daily disposing of 200 tickets at a penny apiece to all poor people who are able to afford that small amount, the soup being served at the Dean Clough Dining Rooms at noon every day. The Vicar of All Saints' and other clergymen have been, and are still, acting as almoners of private funds whereby other deserving cases—cases that do not usually obtrude themselves until the pinch of hunger forces them—are relieved. There is a soup kitchen too, at the Trnity-street Baptist Chapel, and more than one private person and town councillor has been providing poor children with free dinners and teas on certain days. Nor should the efforts of the Salvation Army be forgotten. Within the past week members of this organisation have fed 600 people with soup and bread, and now that their funds are running short they are seeking grants of tickets from the Central Committee. The interest taken in the administration of relief generally is great, and subscriptions are received daily. The highest individual donation to the Mayor's Fund hitherto is 25*l.* but the handsome collection of 38*l.* was raised on Sunday at the Parish Church. The Vicar (the Ven. Archdeacon Brooke) is, by the way, an active member of the Central Committee. The hon. secretaries to the Mayor's Fund are the Town Clerk (Mr. Keighley Walton), and the Rev. F. E. Millson (Unitarian Minister). Of the acrimonious insinuations of the Radical Alderman who intruded party-political observations the other day, nothing need here be said except that his own friends are ashamed of the incident, and the committee has passed a resolution to this effect that there is absolutely no distinctien of sect or party in the administration of the relief.

The Local Government Board and the Distress.

At a meeting of the Leeds Board of Guardians yesterday—Mr. R. Garland (chairman) presiding—a letter was read from the Local Government Board, in which that authority called attention to the distress existing throughout Great Britain, and pointing to certain methods by which local authorities might endeavour to relieve such distress. A copy of the Circular, it was stated, had been forwarded to the Town Councils, District Councils, and Boards of Guardians. In it the Local Government Board authorities stated that having regard to the scarcity of employment which at present existed in many parts of the country, aggravated as it now was by the protracted frost, the Board had deemed it advisable to bring under the special attention of local authorities means which might be adopted for providing in times of exceptional distress employment for the unemployed of a class who did not ordinarily have recourse to Boards of Guardians for relief. The Board felt sure that Town Councils would concur with them in their view as to the great importance of aiding artisans and others who made great personal sacrifices in order to avoid the stigma of pauperism, to maintain their independence. This, it wa, pointed out, would best be secured by the local authorities proceeding with the execution of the works which in the interests of their district as regarded its sanitary condition or local improvement or otherwise it was desirable should be carried out at the time when other employment was difficult to obtain. What was required in the endeavour to find employment for artisans and others who had hitherto avoided Poor Law assistance, and who were temporarily deprived of employment was:—(1) Work which would not involve the stigma of pauperism; (2) work which all could perform, whatever might have been their previous avocation; (3) work which did not compete with that of other labourers at present in employment. These works the Local Government Board stated might be of the following kind, amongst others:—Cleansing of streets not usually undertaken by local authorities; laying out and paving of new streets; paving of unpaved streets, and making of footpaths in country roads; spade husbandry on sewage farms; laying out of open spaces; recreation grounds; new cemeteries, or disused burial grounds; and providing or extending sewage works and works of water supply. It was further suggested that there should be, as far as possible, co-operation between Boards of Guardians and Town or District Councils. Mr. J. Wilson said the letter was an improper one to forward to a body like the Leeds Board of Guardians, inasmuch as it was calculated to create a false impression on the public mind. This letter was sent to the Leeds Board of Guardians suggesting means of employment, every one of which came under the jurisdiction of a body like the City Council, and not of the Board of Guardians at all. The Local Government Board knew this as well as the Leeds Guardians did, and it was therefore out of place to send such a communication. The inference from such a letter being forwarded was that the Guardians had power to carry out the works suggested, and were not doing so. Such a letter to the Board of Guardians was unwise and injudicious. The Rev. W. H. Stansfield observed that doubtless the explanation of the letter being addressed to the Board was that in many instances the Guardians and the District Council authority were the same, and that it was difficult to discriminate to which Boards the Local Government authorities ought to address the letter. Perhaps it had been thought most advisable to send the Circular to all Boards of Guardians. The communication was allowed to lie on the table. A communication was read from the Lambeth Board of Guardians intimating that they had decided to submit to the Local Government Board an urgent entreaty that steps might be taken for obtaining with the least possible delay a census of the persons out of employment throughout the country, and suggesting that a carefully chosen special commission be appointed to inquire into the whole question of the unemployed. The problem was one which, in their opinion, had become too great for local authorities to deal with, and they suggested that such action as that indicated ought to be taken by the Imperial Parliament. The Board thought the suggestions contained in the letter to be very commendable, and approved of them.

Death from Starvation in Leeds.

The Leeds City Coroner (Mr. J. C. Malcolm) held an inquest yesterday at the Town Hall touching the death of Arthur Beaumont or Lee (22), labourer, Huddersfield, which took place yesterday morning at Harrison's lodging-house, Back New York-street. The deceased, who was a native of Huddersfield, came to Leeds on Thursday last in search of work, but found none. The little money he had was soon gone, and on Saturday night he was obliged to sleep out. He went back to the house on Monday, and he was then noticed by his fellow lodgers to be in a very weak condition. A cripple, who was staying in the house, shared his food with him, but he could not retain it in his stomach, and yesterday morning he was suffering so severely from cramp internally that Dr. White was called in, but he could do nothing for the poor fellow, who was utterly exhausted. The medical evidence was to the effect that the deceased, who had lived for over a week on a little bread and tea, and had slept out several nights, had succumbed to "starvation, accelerated by exhaustion," and a verdict to this effect was returned. The Coroner observed that there did not seem to be any one to blame, inasmuch as the deceased had not made known his condition.

Forty Thousand People Starving.

A deputation, representing the unemployed, waited upon the Mayor of Birmingham yesterday to urge him to forthwith open a Mayor's Relief Fund. Councillor Stevens, who introduced the deputation, said there were 15,000 workers

workers out of employment in Birmingham, representing, with their families, 40,000 starving persons. There has never been such destitution in Birmingham since 1878, when Mr. Jesse Collings, then Mayor, opened a fund.—His Worship said his experience led him to the conclusion that a Mayor's Fund was undesirable, and he thought that the existing relief agencies were capable of dealing with the distress if sufficient means were provided. He was perfectly willing to distribute to these agencies to the best of his judgment any funds entrusted to him.

Terrible Destitution in Wales.

A Welsh correspondent says thousands of poor people are literally starving in North Wales, and among the numerous deaths that occur daily many are attributed to exposure and hunger. Relief funds have been started in almost every town and village by the public bodies. In Flint there is shocking destitution. The Duke of Westminster has forwarded a cheque of 100*l.* to the relief fund, and Mr. E. K. Musprat has sent 50*l.*

A Mob Routed in Liverpool.—Inflammatory Speeches by Socialists.

A Liverpool correspondent telegraphs:—Some few days past inflammatory speeches have been delivered by unemployed Socialists near St. George's Hall, the Mayor, in consequence of his denunciation of professional agitators as distinguished from the necessitous poor, being the object of considerable personal abuse and threats against his place of business, Compton House. Yesterday the Socialists had the usual meeting, and word was passed to demonstrate by procession through the city notwithstanding the opposition of the Head Constable. The speaker declared that in France during a great popular upheaval people settled a similar question for themselves by hanging the policeman to the nearest lamp-post. Inflammatory language of this kind, it was thought, would probably develop into a serious riot; in fact, a prominent Anarchist had already been removed from the gathering. The Head Constable determined when they began their march through the city to frustrate them by breaking up the masses of Socialists whenever they formed in large bodies. The police formed a cordon round Compton House, and also routed a mob who sought to get possession of St. John's churchyard and enclosure near St. George's Hall.

The Relief Movement in Bradford.

A Meeting of the Mayor's Relief Committee was held at the Town Hall, Bradford, yesterday, the Mayor (Alderman W. W. Wood) presiding. The maximum value of coupons to be distributed was fixed at 7*s.* 6*d.* each.—Mr. W. C. Lupton asked that the Ward Committees might be empowered to pay for medical relief where necessary, pointing out that the Infirmary did not meet such cases.—The matter was postponed to a future meeting. A grant of 20*l.* was made to the Nurses' Institution, on condition that the names of persons to whom relief was granted should be supplied to the Committee daily. A suggestion was made that the public parks of the town should give up the proceeds of one day's skating each to the fund, and Mr. Christopher Greenwood promised to bring the matter before the Parks Committee of the Town Council.—Mr. J. Morer asked that the cottage property owners of the borough should be asked to reduce rents temporarily during the prevalence of the distress, but the proposal did not meet with favour. Up to six o'clock last night 939*l.* 6*s.* 3*d.* had been contributed to the Mayor's fund. At the usual weekly meeting of the Board of Guardians held yesterday at the Workhouse (Mr. W. Fletcher, chairman, presiding), it was stated that during the past week relief had been given to 3,796 outdoor poor, at a cost of 349*l.* 11*s.* 3*d.*, an increase of 1,450 persons.—The Chairman reported the result of the conference with the Finance Committee of the Corporation as to the possibility of the establishment of relief works by the Corporation. The propositions of the Guardians were, he said, received in good spirit by the Corporation, and he thought there was a good prospect of some of the works being put in hand.

Batley.

A meeting of the Relief Committee in connection with the Charity Organization took place yesterday in the Mayor's Parlour at the Town Hall—his Worship (Councillor Joseph Wilson) presiding. It was reported that a great deal of distress existed in the town, and that in the case of school children many were attending without having had any breakfast, and in some instances head teachers had at their own expense served boys and girls with soup and buns. This information was vouchsafed by a deputation from the School Board, headed by the chairman (Mr. W. Moorhouse), after hearing which the Committee decided to make arrangements for the feeding of the most needy school children, of which there were about 100. Mr. M. Crothers (secretary) mentioned that since last week 1,150 loaves of bread and 200 cwt. of coal had been distributed by the Committee, and read out a long list of subscriptions to the relief fund. Of 140 circulars sent out only 47 had responded, and it was hoped that more would come forward and help in the distress, which was now so acute. Weekly subscriptions, so long as the frost lasted, were announced, amounting to 36*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.* Yesterday the licensed victuallers of Batley held a meeting to make arrangements for a further distribution of relief to outdoor labourers.

Castleford.

At the meeting of the Castleford Urban District Council held last evening, it was decided to take advantage of the special terms now offered by Government in regard to loans for the creation of new works in order to provide work for the unemployed. The late Board have for a considerable time had under view the provision of a public park, and as sufficient land for the purpose has now been given by Lord Houghton and Mr. J. D. Bland (Lord of the Manor), it was resolved to make application to the Local Government Board for 3,000*l.* in order to lay out a recreation ground. It was further decided to ask for a loan to enable the Council to pave certain streets.

Huddersfield.

At the Central Soup Kitchen at Huddersfield yesterday 630 quarts of soup and 700 2lb. loaves were distributed to the poor, and 144 free meals were supplied to the necessitous who had been unable to obtain tickets. Coffee, bread, and cheese were again distributed to a large number of persons at the Police Fire Brigade Station in the evening.

Knaresborough.

The Committee appointed to distribute the relief fund at Knaresborough had up to Tuesday night expended over 100*l.* In consequence of the continued severity of the weather 222 tickets for coals were issued to 269 applicants, and tickets were given out for soup, bread, and tea to families to the number of 688. As the funds are now nearly exhausted an appeal is being made for subscriptions.

Pudsey.

A grand carnival was held last evening at Pudsey in aid of the Central Relief Fund. It commenced with a torchlight procession, headed by the Pudsey Brass Band, which went round the town and finished at the Hough side skating rink. There were hundreds of persons present skating, and a handsome sum of money was taken during the afternoon and evening. At noon yesterday 202 persons received soup at the Mechanics' Institute, and 20*l.* worth of groceries were distributed amongst the more needy cases. Mr. S. Lobley, one of the School Board officials, stated,

at a meeting of the School Board held yesterday, that every day dinners were provided for a large number of children at every school under the Board. The directors of the Pudsey Gas Company have given 100 tons of coke for distribution amongst the poor of the town.

Wakefield.

The distress in this city has at length begun to be serious in many quarters, and this having come to the knowledge of Councillor Jonas Nicholson, the Mayor, he has convened a meeting by circular, to be held this afternoon, to consider the best means of alleviating the distress. Meanwhile much generosity has been exercised by many of the residents, and large quantities of good nourishing soup and bread are daily distributed at the soup kitchen and School of Cookery in Alms House-lane. Mr. George Stubley, of the firm of Messrs. G. & J. Stubley, cloth manufacturers, has made arrangements to relieve 400 poor persons this afternoon. Each person will be presented with a stone of flour, two pounds of sugar, and a quarter of a pound of tea.

"The Yorkshire Post" Clothing List.

The extraordinary severity with which the pinch of winter has returned at a time when most people were looking for the disappearance of the frost, has given fresh occasion for the utilisation of the clothing scheme which has been before our readers during the last few weeks. The appeal embodied in it merely asks the well-to-do who have warm and serviceable cast-off clothing to spare to forward to such of the persons named below as givers any select parcels likely to be useful to the ill-clad. Those who are in a position to make this small contribution of comfort to the relief of the suffering poor will not require much guidance as to the kind of articles likely to be serviceable. Their own judgment will suffice. But there is a general outcry for clothing and boots suitable for children. Any of the clergy and others whose names are found in the following list will be grateful for such help.

PERSONS to whom Parcels of Cast-off Clothing may be Sent.—(*All such gifts should be delivered free.*)

Airmyn :
Rev. E. Peters, Airmyn Vicarage, near Goole.
Balne :
Rev. H. R. Harrisson, Balne Vicarage, Snaith.
Barnsley :
Rev. S. H. East, Carlton Vicarage.
Batley :
St. Mary's—Rev. C. Gordon.
Bradford :
St. Stephen's—Rev. F. E. H. Crowther, 11, Baxandall Street.
The Cinderella Club—Lees Street, Thornton Road.
Cambridge :
Weston Colville (Six Mile Bottom Station)—Rev. T. D. Barker, The Rectory.
Carlinghow :
Rev. E. S. Rodd, Carlinghow Vicarage, Batley.
Castleford :
Castleford Relief Committee – Mr. A. Hartley, Secretary.
Castleford School Board—Mr. A. Wilson, Clerk.
Darfield :
Rev. B. T. Barnes, The Vicarage.
Darlington :
Mr. W. Clapham, Charity Organization Office, Darlington.
Dawgreen :
Rev. F. W. Hatfield, The Church House.
Denaby Main :
Rev. R. P. Roseveare, Curate-in-Charge.
Dudley Hill :
Rev. R. Roberts, Curate-in-Charge, Tong Street.
Dewsbury :
Earlsheaton—Rev. R. S. Davies, The Vicarage.
Dewsbury Moor—Rev. W. C. Daniel, The Vicarage.
Grangetown, R.S.O. :
Rev. D. V. Stoddart, 12, Bolckow Road.
Grimsby :
Rev. R. Meddings, St. Andrew's Waterside Mission Room.
Councillor Jeffs, Fish Docks.
Halifax :
St. Michael's Mission—Rev. H. P. Dempsey, St. Michael's Parsonage, Southowram Bank.
All Souls'—Rev. T. Lewthwaite, All Souls' Vicarage.
Cinderella Club—Mr. F. Greenwood, 17, Hope Hall Terrace.
Parish Church—Rev. C. H. Osler, Assistant Curate, 6, Clare Road.
Heckmondwike :
Rev. G. Beer, St. Saviour's Mission, Ashfield Terrace.
Hensall :
Rev. E. H. Bryan, Hensall Vicarage, York.
Huddersfield :
Rashcliffe—Rev. J. Dunbar, Rashcliffe Vicarage.
Denby—Rev. R. E. Taglis, Denby Vicarage.
St. Mark's—Rev. T. K. Killam, 6, George Street.
Birchencliffe—Rev. J. T. Taylor, 86, West Street, Lindley, Huddersfield.
Hull :
Wesleyan Mission—Rev. A. E. Newbery, 10, Victoria Terrace, Anlaby Road ; and the Rev. J. E. Whydale, 30, Spring Street.
St. Philip's—Rev. J. Wright-Moore, St. Philip's Vicarage.
St. Mary's, Old Sculcoates—Rev. W. J. Pearson, Ardwick Lodge, Eldon Grove, Beverley Road.
Drypool Vicarage—Rev. J. J. Beddow.
St. Stephen's Vicarage—Rev. J. Heany.
St. Silas—Sister Naomi, 97, Barmston Street.
Idle :
Rev. W. Marshall, Idle Vicarage.
Keighley :
Rev. Wallace Duthie, 13, Victoria Park View.
Knottingley :
Rev. F. E. Egerton, The Vicarage.

Lancaster:

Lancaster :
Rev. J. W. Blakemore, Chaplain H.M. Prison, Lancaster Castle.

Leeds :
Armley Hall Parish—Rev. D. T. Milligan, 10, Ingleby Street, Canal Street, New Wortley.
All Souls'—Annie Hebblethwaite, Parish House, 64, Woodhouse Street.
Church Army Labour Home—Rev. Manley Power, Ebenezer Street, Vicar Lane; and Working Lads' Lodging House, Kirkgate.
Gospel Hall, Woodhouse Street—Mr. Northcote Willy, 123, Victoria Road, Headingley.
Hunslet Wesleyan Mission Chapel—Mr. J. Haywood, 14, Mosdale Street, Hunslet Road.
Hunslet Parish Church—Rev. W. C. Carter, 163, Carr Moor Side, Hunslet.
Hunslet—Rev. Father Dekkers.
Lady Lane Mission—Rev. H. T. Chapman, 11, Northfield Terrace.
Leeds City Mission—Mr. J. Mosby, 13, South Parade.
St. Alban's—Rev. T. J. Hamerton, St. Alban's Vicarage, York Road.
St. Michael's—Rev. J. J. Merry, St. Michael's Vicarage, Meanwood Road.
St. Martin's—Rev. R. G. P. Bullock, 24, Sheepscar Terrace, Buslingthorpe Lane
St. Peter's Wesleyan Mission—Mr. John Pickup, St. Peter's Wesleyan Chapel.
St. Matthew's—Rev. W. Dunn, 80, Camp Road.
Burmantofts—Rev. T. E. Jameson, St. Stephen's Vicarage.
Burley—Rev. J. W. Cockerill, 244, Burley Road.
St. Peter's, Hunslet—Rev. Newton Merry, St. Peter's Vicarage, Hunslet Moor.
St. Simon's—Rev. S. A. E. Brooking, St. Simon's Vicarage.
St. Philip's—Rev. J. A. Pink, 17, Mercy Street.
St. Mark's Mission House, Woodhouse Street—(care of Miss Legh.)
United Institution for the Blind and Deaf and Dumb, Albion Street.
East Leeds—Miss Hannah Frost, Lincoln Fields School, and Miss Emma Frost St. James's School, York Street.
Holy Trinity—Rev. Canon Bullock, Boar Lane Shelter.
St. Clement's—Rev. T. S. Fleming, The Vicarage, Chapletown Road.
New Wortley—Rev. E. H. Palmer, New Wortley Vicarage.
Hunslet—Rev. John Chute, St. Jude's Vicarage.
All Hallow's—Rev. J. O. Coop, 126, Hyde Park Road.
St. Mary's, New Wortley—Rev. W. J. Dickinson, 72, Tong Road.
St. Thomas's, Leylands—Rev. W. S. Sutthery, 15, Brunswick Place.
St. Saviour's—The Sister in Charge, House of Charity, St. Saviour's.
Boys' Refuge—Mr. E. Waite, 29, Brunswick Terrace.
St. Mary's, Quarry Hill—Rev. W. S. Kennedy, St. Mary's Vicarage.
St. Silas, Hunslet—Rev. C. H. Badcock, The Vicarage.
Christ Church, Meadow Lane—Rev. A. R. Fernsby, 1 South Brook Street, Hunslet Lane.
Elizabeth Fletcher (Church of England Temperance Society), 85, Woodhouse Street.
St. Edmund's—Rev. J. Thursfield, St. Edmund's Vicarage, Leeds.
Bible Women's Mission (Little London)—Miss Weston, 3, Reginald Terrace.
St. Agnes—Rev. W. H. Stansfied, St. Agnes Vicarage, Burmantofts.
St. Andrew's—Rev. W. E. O. Stevens, 129, Belle Vue Road.
St. Barnabas—Rev. F. Hewitt, 17, Cambria Terrace, Elland Road.
St. Luke's—Rev. H. J. Sharp, St. Hilda's Vicarage, Cross Green Lane.
St. John Baptist—Rev. L. Drakeford-Lewis, Vicarage, Newtown.

Liverpool :
St. Jude's—Rev. Edward Bullock, St. Jude's Clergy House, Canterbury Street.
Rev. R. F. Winter, St. Andrew's Waterside Church Mission, South Castle Street.

Masborough :
Rev. W. A. Strawbridge, Masborough Vicarage.

Middlesbrough :
Eston—Church Army, Nurse Bagshaw, 7, York Street, South Bank, R.S.O.

Morley :
St. Paul's—Rev. H. Bircham, St. Paul's Vicarage, Morley.
Bruntcliffe—Rev. J. H. Thorpe, Bruntcliffe Vicarage (Station-Morley).

Runcorn :
Rev. W. H. Stables, Parish Church, Runcorn.

Sancton :
Rev. H. T. Hutchinson, Sancton Vicarage, East Yorkshire (Market Weighton Station).

Skipton-in-Craven :
Mr. R. Walker, Charity Organisation Society, Mechanics' Institute.

South Kirkby :
Rev. H. M. Wellington, South Kirkby Vicarage, Wakefield (Moorthorpe Station).

Stanningley :
St. Paul's—Rev. W. A. Challis, St. Paul's Vicarage.

Stoke on-Trent :
Rev. J. E. Walker, All Saint's, Boothen, Stoke.

Sunderland :
Sunderland Flower Mission—Mr. W. D. Ramsay, 1, Briery Vale.
Rev. A. A. Boddy, All Saints' Vicarage, Monkwearmouth.

Thorpe Hesley :
Rev. R. T. C. Slade, Thorpe Hesley Vicarage, Chapletown Station, *via* Sheffield.

Wakefield :
The Ven. Archdeacon Donne, The Vicarage, Wakefield.
Outwood—Rev. T. H. Bywater, Outwood Vicarage (Lofthouse Station).
Lofthouse—Rev. G. H. Scott, The Vicarage.
St. Catherine's—Rev. E. J. Bardsley.

Whitwood Mere :
Rev. J. J. Needham, Whitwood Mere Rectory.

Wombwell :
Rev. R. B. Blakeney, The Rectory, Wombwell.

The Distress.—Relief Measures in Leeds.

The Central Relief Committee held their usual meeting at the Town Hall yesterday afternoon. The Mayor (Alderman Gilston) presided, and there was a full attendance. It was reported that the subscriptions received in response to the appeal of the committee had amounted to 4,203*l.* 4*s.* 6*d.* in one week. The new subscription included 30*l.* from the Leeds Fireclay Company, 21*l.* each from Mr. Joseph Pickersgill and the Leeds and Wakefield

Breweries, 20*l.*, from Messrs. Thos. Ibbitson & Co. ; 10*l.* 10*s.* each from Mrs. Tetley (Fox Hill, Leeds), Messrs. John Marshall, Son, & Co., and Messrs. McCorquodale & Co. ; 10*l.* each from Mr. William Pepper, Mr. C. G. Oates, and Mr. Joshua Buckton. Donations in kind were also announced as follows :—Forty heavy rugs from Mr. Joseph Moore, linen warehouse, Albion Street ; 1 cwt. of meat from Messrs. W. and G. Scott, provision merchants ; 200 yards of cloth from Mr. William Fox, manufacturer (to be distributed in the Armley and Burley districts), and half a ton of fish from Messrs. William Fall and Sons. It was also reported to the committee that complaints had been made in various quarters, especially the poor themselves, that grants of relief had been obtained under false pretences and misused, and a resolution was adopted on the question. The Committee, while assured that such cases were rare and exceptional, resolved to prosecute any persons so imposing on the public charity, and the committee decided to ask the help of all concerned in giving them such information as would enable them to take proceedings against offenders. It was also resolved to publish this resolution throughout the city as a warning to persons attempting to abuse the donations of the benevolent.

We are desired by the Mayor and other members of the committee to state that enquiry forms handed to the Leeds Trades Council are being misused. It is understood that these forms should be filled in by members of the Trades Council, and the recipients should take them to the Local Relief Committees, who would give their cases immediate attention. The Central Committee, however, has been informed that instead of this course being pursued, the inquiry forms, bearing the official stamp of the Trades Council, have been taken direct to shopkeepers, who have supplied groceries corresponding to the value set out in the forms.

The Ward Relief Committees find ample scope for the exercise of their charity, and also of their discretion. In West Hunslet 266 cases have been relieved at a cost of 36*l.*, the amounts granted varying from 1*s.* to 5*s.* In addition eight tons of coal and five loads of coke have been distributed. The committee in this ward seem to be well organised, and we have two good secretaries in Mr. W. Grisdale, jun., and Mr. John Robb. The Armley Ward Relief Committee, of which Dr. Coleman is chairman, have afforded relief in 250 cases during the present week, granting tickets of the value of 2*s.* 6*d.* and downwards for coal and groceries. The Leeds Publicans' Fund continues to grow, and yesterday there were further distributions of soup and bread. Among private benefactions may be mentioned a gift of 100 4-lb. loaves and 60 gallons of soup to the poor of Buslingthorpe by Mr. Joseph Speight, contractor, Chapeltown Road. Mr. George Bray, of Wood Lane, Headingley, has decided to distribute 200 loaves of bread and 200 quarts of soup to poor people in the North-East Ward three times per week as long as the cold weather continues, and one week afterwards. The distribution will take place at the Miners' Institute, York Road, under the personal superintendence of Mr. Bray and his family. A meeting has been held at the George Hotel—Dr. McCandlish in the chair—to consider what should be done to relieve the exceptional distress in the Woodhouse Lane district. It was resolved that tradesmen and others be asked to contribute to a fund for the purpose of providing bread, soup, coal, &c., and that a committee be appointed to wait upon them. For the past three or four weeks about 100 quarts of soup, with bread and coal, have been daily distributed by Mrs. McCandlish at St. James Street, but the distress increasing, it is necessary to appeal for outside help.

In aid of the Central Relief Fund, Herr Julius Seeth, who is at the Coliseum with a troupe of performing lions and other attractions, gave a matinee yesterday, but there was only a small attendance, and consequently the money to be handed over to the Mayor, under whose patronage the performance took place, will not be so large as was anticipated. By arrangement with the General Committee formed last Friday, the Leeds Benevolent or Strangers' Friend Society is continuing its useful work. The committee of this organisation held a meeting last night at the Mechanics' Institute and considered 61 sick cases. The amounts granted varied from 7*s.* 6*d.* to 1*l.* 1*d.*

Yesterday morning the unemployed met in Victoria Square, but adjourned to the Oxford Place Wesleyan Schoolroom, which the Rev. S. Chadwick had placed at their disposal. The room however was inadequate to hold the 600 or 700 men who assembled, and those who were unable to gain admission to the building remained in the yard, where they were addressed by Mr. D. B. Foster. Inside, the chairman was Mr. G. H. Burniston, who read to the audience a number of complaints about the way in which relief was being granted. One letter stated that assistance had been given twice to a woman in the neighbourhood of Wellington Road who was well off, her husband being a railway *employé* and her son a stoker. In addition, it was alleged that the family hold railway shares, and have money in the Leeds Co-operative Stores. Mr. Burniston commented on the alleged abuse of the Public Relief Fund, and the audience was not slow in expressing their indignation in exclamations of "Disgraceful" and "Scandalous." A resolution was passed concerning the action of the Corporate Property Committee in closing the crypt of the Town Hall to the unemployed. A sad case was brought to light after the unemployed meeting. A discharged soldier complained to the reporters that he had been refused relief. His discharge papers showed that he was seven years in the York and Lancaster Regiment, and that he had been in several engagements, and had the Egyptian, Tel-el-Kebir medals, and bronze clasp, as well as two good-conduct badges. Some time ago he was compelled to leave civil employment, owing to the depression in trade, and at the present time he and his wife and six children are practically without means of subsistence. He is of middle age and to all appearance a respectable man.

The Joint Unemployed Committee have consented to take part in a conference to be held in the Oxford Place Wesleyan Chapel on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday afternoons next, when the following subjects will be discussed :—"The problem of the unemployed in its relation to legislation, land, and economics," "The relation of drink to labour and poverty," and "The Church and the social problem." The idea of this conference originated with the Rev. S. Chadwick, who appeals to the public for money to enable him on two days to present each man attending with a sandwich.

The Distress at Barnsley.

Just about three o'clock yesterday afternoon a long procession of men might have been seen crossing the Market Place at Barnsley, many of them laughing and chatting with the satisfaction that usually follows the completion of a day's toil. As a matter of fact they were all workers—their coal-dust complexions denoted of what order—and they were making the best of their way homewards. On the line of their march stood a little public-house, and hanging shiveringly around its doors were groups of another class of men, most, if not all, of whom would probably have preferred to be in the position of miners at this bitter season instead of waiting their turns to file up a narrow back staircase and receive tickets for relief. Circumstances have altered cases. Less than two years ago, notwithstanding that they themselves also suffered from the effects of the coal dispute, the out-door labourers of Barnsley were found contributing their mite to support the colliers' families. Now it is the men employed in the mines who are asked to help to feed the starving poor of this big working-class town. The present distress is by no means so acute as that experienced during the troublous period just referred to, but it is, no doubt, "bad enough." The estimate of those best able to judge is that nearly 800 men—the majority of whom have families—are, and have been for six weeks, suffering from severe trials attendant upon temporary loss of employment. About 700 alone, it is said, are connected with the various building trades, and then there are quarrymen and other out-door labourers to take into consideration ; while the continued depression in the glass-bottle making trade is another serious factor to be reckoned with. Some improvement in the linen trade makes it possible for female workers of a family to keep the wolf from the door in certain cases ; and those families having male members employed at the collieries are not badly off. Curious to relate, the relieving officers of the Poor Law Union report a considerable reduction in the number of cases of out-door relief for the past fortnight, as compared with the like period last year. Nevertheless, there would appear to be every necessity for the efforts benevolent people in Barnsley are now making, and especially is there an urgent call for help on the part of the women and children. In compliance with a requisition, the Mayor (Alderman Woodcock) convened a town's meeting last Monday, and a Central Relief Fund was at once started under his Worship's presidency, with a very representative committee to administer it. As a result a sum of 70*l.* was disbursed

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in charity last Tuesday, and a further sum of 90*l.* yesterday. The total amount of subscriptions received up to yesterday was 266*l.*, so that there is a balance in hand of about 100*l.* The plan adopted is to distribute coupons of the value of 2*s.* each per man, and 6*d.* extra for the wife, and 6*d.* per child, the coupons being available for the purchase of both food and fuel. Several acceptable gifts in kind have been received, and these also are being given out by ticket. The Mitchell Main and Barnsley Colliery Companies have each given coal; and the Globe Tea Company has presented 100 stones of flour. Bread and meat have likewise been contributed by various charitable townspeople. Until the present week the wants of the actually needy were in a quiet way partially supplied through the kindness of individuals, not the least active being those Church workers who invariably manage to search out the deserving poor. A number of the men themselves, too, having exhausted their resources, ventured to appeal to some of the colliers on wage days, and thereby realised 3*s.* 2*d.* per man. The School Board attendance officer has not been unmindful of the children, many of whom were kept away from school from hunger and cold. Members of the Board and their friends subscribed together to find meals for the little sufferers, and now, to-morrow the Central Committee have arranged for a soup and bread distribution at the Harvey Institute for the especial benefit of school children in the borough. The proposal to open a soup kitchen for the older people has fallen through because there is believed to be some diffidence among applicants for relief at being seen publicly fetching away cans of soup. The Yorkshire Miners' Council have suggested a Miners' General Fund to meet the distress, but it appears doubtful whether the project can be carried into effect for a week or two. In addition to the work of the Central Relief Fund, and individual benevolence, the value of Lady Harriet Wentworth's Charity deserves to be mentioned. This fund has proved a great boon to Barnsley, and the service it has rendered during the present winter is spoken of in high terms of gratitude. Some of the cases reported by the visitors and inquirers in reference to the distress are of a very sad nature; but let once the weather break, and the probability is that the principal reason for a relief movement will disappear. At present, in one or two outlying parts of the town, the water mains are frozen, and water carts have to go round to meet the requirements of the inhabitants. The Rev. Canon Kirby (rector of St. Mary's) is, needless to say, taking an active, sympathetic part on the Relief Committee. Mr. Charles Methley is the hon. treasurer to the fund, and Mr. W. B. Cooper is acting as hon. secretary.

A Relief Fund formed at York.

A public meeting, called by the Lord Mayor of York, was held yesterday at the Guildhall, York, for the purpose of raising a fund to alleviate the distress in the city. The Lord Mayor presided, and there was a large attendance, among those present being:—Alderman Rymer, Alderman Clayton, Alderman Dodsworth, the Dean of York, Canon Machell, Rev. E. S. Carter, Rev. H. Vyvyan, Rev. D. Young, Mr. H. Leeman, Mr. W. W. Hargrove, Mr. E. Lycett Green, M.P.H., and others.—Letters had been received from the sheriff of the city (Dr. Tempest Anderson), and Canon Argles, expressing their sympathy with the movement.—The Lord Mayor stated that at a meeting of the subscribers to the fund raised two years ago for the relief of distress caused by a flood, it had been resolved unanimously that a balance in hand of 114*l.* 16*s.* 2*d.* should be handed over to the committee which it was intended to appoint that day. Much distress at present existed in York, and, as the funds of various organisations had been heavily called upon, it was desirable that prompt action should be taken to raise a fund for the purpose. It was thought that the best plan would be to appoint one central committee, who should receive subscriptions and vote grants to the various organisations.—The Dean of York proposed that a public fund should be opened for the relief of the existing distress in the city, and Alderman Rymer seconded the resolution, and said they really wanted to relieve the distress of those who were too modest to come forward and make their wants known.—Miss Robinson supported the resolution, which was carried; and on the motion of Alderman Dodsworth, seconded by Alderman Clayton, it was agreed that grants should be made by the central committee to the existing local charitable organisations.—A committee was then appointed to carry out the work, and the Lord Mayor afterwards intimated that the amounts forwarded to him, and received in the room, together with the balance from the flood relief fund, would amount to about 250*l.*

The Relief in Bradford.

A further meeting of the Mayor's Relief Fund Committee was held yesterday at the Town Hall, Bradford, his Worship presiding.—An offer was submitted on behalf of Taylor's Drug Company to provide 400 parcels of tea and sugar, and the firm asked the Committee to undertake the distribution of the coupons. This was agreed to. —Mr. M. O'Flynn stated that in the West Ward they had received 390 applications, and had spent 23*l.* 19*s.*, though the grant was only 20*l.* Reports were received from other wards, and Monsignor Mottler pointed out that it would be an act of folly to have a large sum of money in hand when the frost broke up.—The Mayor said at the rate the money was being spent they had only a supply for a week and a-half.—After further discussion, the following additional grants were made:—North Ward, 5*l.*; South, 10*l.*; West, 20*l.*; East Bowling, 5*l.*; West Bowling, 5*l.*; Great Horton, 5*l.*; Listerhills, 5*l.*; Little Horton, 20*l.*; Manningham, 15*l.*; Bolton, 5*l.*; Heaton, 5*l.*; Allerton, 5*l.*; Bradford Moor, 5*l.*; Exchange, 5*l.*; and the East Ward, 5*l.* Up to six o'clock last evening the amount subscribed to the fund stood at 1,211*l.* 16*s.* 6*d.*

The sum of 11*s.*, half the collection made at a lecture given by the Rev. Canon Ivens (vicar of Sowerby Bridge), in connection with Emmanuel Church Recreation Society, Leeds, has been given to the relief of the distress in the North-West Ward.

The Bishop of Southwell has sent 100*l.* to the Archdeacon of Nottingham, who has apportioned it to the clergy of the poorer parishes for distribution among the poor.

Increased Allowances at Morley.

The Relief Committee at Morley have resolved to increase the allowance to unemployed heads of families from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.*, and to each child 6*d.* per week. The Co-operative Society have placed 130 stones of flour at the disposal of the committee for distribution to-day. Subscriptions have come in this week, amounting to 143*l.* making the total relief fund 270*l.* The Licensed Victuallers yesterday provided a free dinner in the Temperanc Hall to 400 children.

The Needs of Castleford.

Yesterday there was a large attendance at the Relief Committee held in the Co-operative Hall, presided by Mr. A. Davies.—The Secretary (Mr. A. Hartley) reported additional subscriptions, making a total of 324*l.* 3 This week's distribution to the 350 cases of 2*s.* per adult and 6*d.* per child would cost 50*l.*—The Chairman: A keeping pace with the expenditure?—The Treasurer (Mr. A. Wilson): Hardly. We have dropped a litt week.—Several cases of further distress were added to the books. One applicant had sold nearly all he had applying for relief.

Tadcaster.

A Relief Committee has been appointed, with Messrs. J. A. Scriven and J. R. Tiplady as secretaries. W. H. Gilmour (Bradford Old Bank), treasurer. Mr. J. A. Scriven will give away 180 pints of soup, w this morning, and on Monday at noon, and every alternate day whilst the present severe weather conti will be a similar distribution. Mr. C. Shann has subscribed 10*l.*, and every person solicited h contributed.

Thorner.

The Rev. J. W. Muscroft (vicar of Thorner) and the churchwardens (Messrs. D. H. Hartley and F. W. W. Sheppard) have distributed flour and groceries to about 50 families who are in need of relief on account of the severe weather, and they purpose continuing it as long as their funds will allow them to do so.

Retford.

A meeting of the Relief Committee was held in the Town Hall, Retford, yesterday, when the Mayor (Mr. J. H. Hewitt) announced that, in answer to the appeal, over 150*l.* had been subscribed, and some hundreds of tickets had been issued for coal and bread. It was resolved to continue the work, and also to open a soup kitchen in the butter market on Monday and succeeding days.

Lancaster.

The distress in Lancaster is very acute. In addition to the soup kitchen, which has been open three weeks, it has been found necessary to commence a free coal stores.

Middlesbrough.

The four ladies who are members of the Middlesbrough Board of Guardians have formed a charity organisation, and are distributing tickets to the poor for food to be obtained at the various eating-houses in the town.

Durham.

The committee formed in Durham last Monday have met each day, and the committee of the Mendicity Society are working in strict harmony with them. The hungry children at all the schools in the town are served with coffee and bread just before the schools are opened, and a grant has also been made for shoes and clothing for the children. Orders for groceries have been distributed all over the city, also coal and coke given by the Durham Gas Company and others. The amount at the bank is over 200*l.*

Pudsey.

Soup was distributed at the Mechanics' Institute, Pudsey, yesterday afternoon, by the Central Relief Committee to 250 persons. Mr. and Mrs. James Stillings, of Radcliffe Villa, have distributed 150 cwt. of coal during the week, and Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan Webster, of Crawshaw Villa, have given 100 stones of flour. Mr. J. H. Dawson, Bankhouse, has given away a large quantity of coke, and Mrs. W. Huggan has distributed flour and tea.

Doncaster.

Yesterday soup and bread were distributed to 700 persons. In addition free breakfasts were provided for school children at the Glyn Cafe, St. George's Hall, and other parts of the town. A very large quantity of coal was also given away.

Carlisle.

The Carlisle Corporation have employed over 1,000 men, who were out of work and suffering from the severe weather, in clearing the streets of snow, the expenditure so far being about 550*l.* The town subscription list has reached nearly 400*l.*, and there are a multitude of smaller agencies at work.

Keighley.

The growing intensity of the local distress may be gauged by the increased number of applicants at the soup kitchen in Butterfield Hall. The figures for the past three days have been: Wednesday, 490 pints; Thursday, 559; yesterday, 575.

Idle.

At this place large numbers of workmen are dependent on the quarries for a livelihood, and the fact of these places having been closed since severe weather set in has created a great amount of distress in the town. A relief committee has been formed, and has done much to alleviate the distress which prevails. At first a soup kitchen was opened, but this has now been closed, and groceries and coal are freely distributed to the deserving poor. Apart from the work of the committee much good is being done by private individuals, whilst the school children at the Church and Thorpe Board Schools are, through the efforts of the masters and mistresses, provided each day with a good breakfast and a soup dinner.

Halifax.

At the meeting of the General Committee, held yesterday at Halifax, presided over by the Mayor (Alderman M. Booth), it was reported that 640*l.* 16*s.* had been distributed in relief, leaving an available balance of 224*l.* 7*s.* 3*d.* Other subscriptions had been promised. A discussion took place with regard to cases of imposition. It was stated that in several instances people in work had obtained relief. The committee intimated that such cases would be severely dealt with in future. The Mayor stated that at some of the public elementary schools free breakfasts were being provided by the teachers and others. Reference was made to the good work which Alderman Whitaker, Councillor Tyson, Mr. Wilkinson Pickles, Councillor Henry Rushworth, and others are doing. Since the opening of the soup kitchen in Trinity-road, 4,320 pints of soup, 1,500 loaves of bread, and 560 parcels of bread and cheese have been distributed. The total amount contributed to the Halifax relief fund in cash and cheques up to last evening was 911*l.* 8*s.* 6½*d.*

Dewsbury and District.

Yesterday a meeting, convened by the Mayor of Dewsbury, took place at the Town Hall to consider what further steps should be taken to relieve the distress. There was a fully representative gathering. It was stated that there had been a few cases of imposition, yet the great body of sufferers had been reached. It was decided to continue distributing relief to-day. The Mayor announced that the subscription list amounted to 340*l.*, and that about half of that amount had been expended. The Independent Labour Party have provided close upon 4,000 meals. The Dewsbury Tradesmen's Association and the Westtown Tradesmen's Association are also providing teas and soup. Mr. W. Haigh, colliery proprietor, has presented the Westtown Committee with a large quantity of coal for distribution; Mr. A. F. Henderson, manager of the Vaudeville Theatre, London, has written announcing that he has arranged to give a special *matinée* of "The New Boy" to-day at the Theatre Royal, Dewsbury, the total receipts of which would be handed over to the poor of the district.

Batley.

Out of a special fund of about 30*l.* collected by Councillor Joseph Colbeck, of the Black Bull Hotel, Batley, among the licensed victuallers of the town, relief was given yesterday at the Town Hall to a large number of out-door labourers who are out of employment through the weather. Notices in the windows of licensed houses were to the effect that all applicants, without limit, who were really in needy circumstances, would be assisted. Tickets for

for groceries, representing in value from 1*s.* to 2*s.*, were given away. This relief was altogether apart from that given by the Charity Organisation, which disbursed yesterday a large supply of bread, tea, and sugar, with coals where required, to over 200 men who assembled in the Market Hall. The Co-operative Society is contributing goods to the value of 5*l.* 5*s.* per week, and Mr. Chaley Fox (president of the Batley Conservative Club) has generously sent a donation of 10*l.* to the relief fund, which Mr. Theo. C. Taylor has likewise helped by a gift of 7*l.* 10*s.* Many contributions of 2*l.* 2*s.* and 1*l.* 1*s.* have been received from the Mayor (Councillor J. Wilson) and other gentlemen.

Unemployed Conference in Leeds.

To the Editor of "*The Yorkshire Post.*"

Sir, Oxford Place Chapel, Leeds, 15th February.

THE problem of the unemployed is just now in everyone's mind. The House of Commons is so impressed with the urgency of the subject that it has appointed a special committee to consider the whole question. In Leeds it has been pressed home so forcibly that the Mayor has opened a special fund for the immediate relief of the distressed; and the response of the citizens has been generous and gratifying. But relief is no remedy; there must be discovered some sound and permanent solution of the problem.

Considering this, therefore, an opportune moment to talk over the whole matter, I have invited the unemployed to a conference extending over three days to be held at Oxford Place Chapel, on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, of next week, commencing each day at three p.m. I have chosen the following subjects for discussion:—Monday, "The Problem of the Unemployed in its Relation to Legislation, Land, and Economics." Tuesday, "The Relation of Drink to Labour and Poverty." Thursday, "The Church and Social Problems."

Now propositions, programmes, and policies are poor stuff for empty stomachs, and I am anxious to give every hungry man a good sandwich on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. But unfortunately I have no funds; and having just raised a considerable amount among my friends, I am not able to go to them again just yet. I venture, therefore, to appeal to your readers for their generous help in this matter. We shall want from 2,000 to 3,000 sandwiches. Help in money, bread, or meat will be duly acknowledged.

I am, &c.,
(signed) *S. Chadwick.*

Children's Teas.

To the Editor of "*The Yorkshire Post.*"

Sir, St. Mary's Vicarage, Leeds.

EVERY other evening, I wish I could say every evening, we are giving a comfortable tea, and afterwards play, in a large room, to about 70 children of the more distressed families in the Quarry Hill and Mabgate district. Will some warm hearts move helping hands to enable us to continue to do so during these miserably hard times? Our local coal fund also is getting low. I think it will not surprise you to hear that the scheme of general relief, benevolent and generous as it is, still fails to reach what appears to us locally as most pitiable cases.

I am, &c.,
(signed) *William Studdert Kennedy.*

The East Hunslet Fund.

To the Editor of "*The Yorkshire Post.*"

Sir,

KINDLY allow us through your valuable paper to thank the under-mentioned ladies and gentlemen for their kind subscriptions to the above fund:—Subscriptions as published, 169*l.* 18*s.* 10*d.*; Jos. Pickersgill (second donation), 5*l.*; Miss Leak, 2*l.*; W. H. Maude, 1*l.* 1*s.*; Mr. Whitehead, 1*l.*; Miss Bulmer, 1*l.* 1*s.*; A. Harpham, 10*s.*; Friend, 5*s.*; Thos. Fearnley, 5*s.*; Mr. Dickenson, 5*s.*; "Harrogate," 2*s.* 6*d.*; Mr. Hope, 2*s.* 6*d.*; R. Jacques, 2*s.* 6*d.*; and we also thankfully acknowledge clothing from Mr. and Mrs. Rhodes, Pickering; and Mr. and Mrs. Richardson of Leeds.

We may inform your readers that we have this week relieved 300 deserving families with tickets for groceries, of from 1*s.* to 4*s.* each, according to the circumstances of the case, and we have also distributed coke and potatoes through the kindness of Mr. R. Wigram and Mr. H. Riley-Smith respectively.

We have now been granting relief for five weeks to hundreds of starving families irrespective of creed, and as we have not received any assistance whatever from the central fund, we again appeal to your readers for assistance to enable us to continue to relieve the poor.

On behalf of the Committee, Yours, &c.
William Cookson, Secretary, Woodhouse Hill, Hunslet.
Robert Sewell, Treasurer, Highgate-street, Low-road.

The Woodhouse Lane Fund.

To the Editor of "*The Yorkshire Post.*"

Sir,

I HAVE great pleasure in acknowledging the following subscriptions to the distress fund of this district. At the meeting of residents on Tuesday evening at the George IV. Hotel, 12*l.* 12*s.* was promised in the room, and as there appears to be no sign of the distress diminishing, we shall be very pleased if subscriptions be forwarded to Mr. A. D. Penny, at the George IV. Hotel, Woodhouse-lane, or to myself.

I am, &c.,
35, St. James-street. (signed) *John McCandlish,*
Honourable Treasurer to the Fund.

Mr. Greenwood, 5*l.*; Dr. Loe, 1*l.* 1*s.*; Mr. Moxon, 1*l.* 1*s.*; Mr. W. Carley, 1*l.* 1*s.*; Dr. J. G. McCandlish (second subscription), 1*l.* 1*s.*; Mr. Ernest Smith, 1*l.* 1*s.*; Mr. Colville, 1*l.* 1*s.*; Mr. A. D. Penny (second subscription), 1*l.* 1*s.*; Mr. John McCandlish, 1*l.* 1*s.*; Mr. Ford, 1*l.* 1*s.*; Mr. Redmayne, 1*l.* 1*s.*; Mr. Oates, 10*s.* 6*d.*; Mr. Clarke, 10*s.* 6*d.*; Mr. Ross, 10*s.* 6*d.*; Mr. Percy Leigh, 10*s.* 6*d.*; Messrs. W. Illingworth & Sons, 1*l.* 1*s.*; Mr. Whittaker, 10*s.* 6*d.*; Mr. Watson, 10*s.* 6*d.*; Mrs. Gordon, 10*s.*; Mr. Walter Senior, 1*l.* 1*s.*; Mr. Baxter (Fenton), 1*l.* 1*s.*; Captain Wilkinson, 10*s.*; Mr. W. Wells, 10*s.* 6*d.*; Mr. Staines, 10*s.* 6*d.*; Mr. Hattersley, 5*s.*; smaller sums up to 12*s.* Bread: Mr. Vasey (daily), Mr. Buckle (daily), and Mr. McGregor; beef, &c.—Mr. Doyle and Mr. Buckton: pork, &c.—Messrs. Bramham Bros.; vegetables, &c.—Messrs. Marshall, Stevenson, Briggs, Ellison, and Walkington; milk and rice—Mr. Ross; provisions—Messrs. Gaunt Brothers.

Rev. C. H. Osler, Halifax, thankfully acknowledges parcels of left-off clothing for those in distress, from Mr. Knott, Mrs. Oakley, Miss Child, Miss Batley, Mrs. Hirst, Mrs. W. Storey, Miss Ingham (new knitted goods), and Mr. Smeeton.

"*Bradford Observer*," *Thursday*, 14*th February* 1895.

The Relief of the Destitute.

Bradford.

A meeting of the committee of the Bradford Relief Fund was held yesterday morning at the Town Hall, the Mayor (Alderman W. Willis Wood) presiding :—

Mr. Rawson (Deputy Town Clerk) reported that the instructions of the committee that 20*s.* be forwarded immediately to each of the elementary schools in the borough for affording immediate relief to the children of suffering parents had been carried out. Some of the schools did not require the full 20*s.*, and only 12*s.* was given, but, on the other hand, the distress at some of the schools was so great that in several cases 30*s.* had been given. The Feversham-street School District was in a most deplorable condition, and 30*s.* was not nearly enough to give to some of the schools. The amount absorbed by the school distribution was 124*l.* It was agreed that the money should be in all cases distributed solely by means of coupons entitling the holder to obtain food or fuel, but not intoxicants, and that the maximum amount to be given to any person should be 7*s.* 6*d.*

The Mayor stated that it was proposed that soup kitchens and other agencies in operation could be subsidised by the general committee, but the disposal of such subsidies would not be left in the hands of the various sub-committees, but would require the approval of the general committee. A number of applications for grants in aid of various charities were received, and a donation of 20*l.* was made to the Nurses' Institution on condition that the names of the persons to whom relief was administered would be supplied to the committee day by day, so as to prevent overlapping.

A subscription list was started in the vestry of St. Andrew's Church, Lister Hills, on Sunday evening after service, to provide soup, &c., for the distressed poor of the parish and neighbourhood, the Vicar (the Rev. William Greenwood) and the Curate (the Rev. H. L. Williams) undertaking the management of the distribution. With the assistance of several ladies, a start was made on Tuesday, when a large quantity of soup was distributed at St. Andrews Vicarage. Donations in kind have been given or promised very freely. On Wednesday, besides soup and bread provided for adults, about 100 poor children from all parts of the parish were served with a basin of soup and a slice of bread in ths schools. Soup and bread will be provided again to-day, and it is intended to-morrow to make another distribution of food. Any contributions in kind or money will, no doubt, be welcomed.

Yesterday Mr. W. H. Townend, of Heaton Hall, commenced to lead, free of cost, the coke which is now being delivered by the Bradford Corporation at Heaton Staith, and obtainable there at the reduced charge of 1*d.* per cwt. The regulation allowance is 6 cwt. to any one person. A soup kitchen has been established at Heaton, conducted by various ladies of the village, the soup being prepared at Heaton Hall.

At a recent meeting at the Bible Christian Chapel, Toller-lane, a Relief Committee was formed to provide free meals for children and others in needy circumstances. The Rev. J. Jeffrey presided, and it was decided to provide teas at six o'clock in the evening, commencing to-day, and as often as the funds will allow, until the distress has abated. A hearty response has been made to the request for funds in the shape of money and provisions, and Mr. C. Bastow, the secretary, 19, Fairfield-road, and Mr. E. Wilkinson, the treasurer, 37, Glenholme-road, will be glad to receive further contributions to carry on the work.

Many of the hotels, political clubs, and tradesmen in the town are generously assisting in the relief of distress in their respective localities.

Leeds.

The donations received yesterday by the Mayor of Leeds brought the fund up to nearly 3,700*l.*, the chief contributors including the Leeds Industrial Co-operative Society, who sent 100 guineas. In addition the Middleton Colliery Company promised 100 tons of coal. The Central Relief Committee were occupied for some time yesterday in considering the difficulties arising out of the numbers and behaviour of the applicants in some districts, considerable trouble having been experienced. The committee made only one grant of funds during the afternoon, viz., 12*l.* 10*s.* to the Leeds School Board, making a total of 62*l.* 10*s.*, for the purpose of providing one free meal a day for 2,600 under-fed school children. The Leeds licensed victuallers have collected over 300*l.*

Halifax.

The Halifax General Relief Committee met yesterday at the Town Hall, the Mayor (Alderman M. Booth) presiding. After reading over the list of subscriptions (which included 10 guineas from Mr. Stansfeld, M.P., 15*l.* 10*s.* from Zion Chapel, Siddal, per D. Smith & Co. ; five guineas from the St. James's Lodge of Freemasons, and 5*l.* from Mr. Joseph Thomson), the Mayor said he thought the result of the appeal very satisfactory, and that the public, all things considered, were responding very well indeed. He had just had an interview with two gentlemen representing the Salvation Army. Since the bad weather began the Army had, they stated, relieved 800 deserving cases with soup and bread. Their funds were now exhausted, and they asked the committee to make them a grant. They could relieve 180 cases a day for about 1*l.* After some discussion, in which the prevailing opinion seemed to be that the best thing to do was for representatives of the Army to join the General Relief Committee, a proposal to make a grant to the Army of 1*l.* per day was withdrawn. A case of alleged flagrant imposition was reported by the Central Ward Committee. It was stated that a woman had appeared before that committee and had declared that her husband had only worked four hours in the previous week, while she herself had earned nothing. She was allowed 5*s.* Two members of the committee afterwards went to the woman's employers. She and her husband worked at the same place, and it was found that the family were earning 38*s.* 6*d.* per week. A proposal was now made by a member of the General Committee that the woman should be prosecuted as a warning to others, and a resolution to that effect was proposed. Eventually it was decided to request the woman and her husband to appear before the General Committee to-morrow and explain. The total amount of subscriptions is 968*l.* 17*s.* 2½*d.*, and the tickets distributed represent a money value of 530*l.* 16*s.* The committee of the Copley and District Athletic Club have decided to give the money taken at their skating ground to-day to the Mayor's relief fund. The ice is in splendid condition, having been recently reflooded.

Huddersfield.

At the soup kitchen at East Parade, Huddersfield, the relief given in the shape of food was considerably increased yesterday as compared with previous distributions ; 630 quarts of soup were served out, and 700 2lb. loaves, and 144 free meals were supplied, Mr. R. Stewart, Victoria-lane, sent vegetables, Mr. James Mellor, Market Place, 56lb. of lentils, and Mr. George Battye, butcher, Market Walk, scraps. On Tuesday afternoon the Huddersfield Police Fire Brigade opened a fund, and up till yesterday afternoon about 7*l.* in money had been given by 62 donors ; 20 tradesmen sent considerable supplies of bread, cheese, meat, milk, fish, dripping, coffee, &c. In the evening a large number of children, principally street hawkers, and adults were supplied with soup, coffee, bread, cheese, &c ; 60 pairs of stockings were sent for distribution by Mrs. Wilkinson, of New-street, and those children who were stockingless were supplied, and others whose feet coverings were in rags had them replaced, the old ones being destroyed. Mr. Potts, the Huddersfield borough accountant, hon. secretary to the Huddersfield Relief Fund, announced yesterday evening that the fund had increased to 643*l.* 12*s.* 4*d.*, from 546*l.* 18*s.* 10*d.* the previous day.

Death of a Huddersfield Man from Starvation.

A shocking case of death from starvation came under the notice of the Leeds coroner (Mr. J. C. Malcolm) and a jury sitting at the Leeds Town Hall yesterday. The victim was Earnest Lee, otherwise Beaumont, aged 21, the son of a widow living at Huddersfield. He left home a week ago last Monday, and appears to have walked to Manchester in search of work. He was unsuccessful, and so tramped on to Leeds, where he arrived on Thursday, taking up his abode at Harrison's Lodging-house, Back New York-street. His funds would only allow him to remain two nights, and on Saturday he was without shelter and without food. Of the latter he seems to have had little or none after coming to Leeds. On Monday he returned to the lodging-house, and it was seen that he was ill. A charitable cripple took pity on him, and paid for a bed and food. The latter Lee could not retain, and on Tuesday the attention of the relieving officer was directed to his case. Dr. White came to see him, but could do little, for Lee was suffering from extreme exhaustion. He told the doctor that he had slept out several nights, and for seven days had had nothing but bread and tea. Yesterday morning he succumbed, and the jury at the inquest returned a verdict of "Death from starvation, accelerated by exposure."

Batley.

A further meeting of the relief committee appointed last week was held yesterday, in the Mayor's parlour at the Town Hall, under the presidency of the Mayor (Mr. J. Wilson). It was reported that an appeal for funds had been made by circular as resolved at the previous meeting, and out of 140 appeals sent, 57 had been responded to. The total amount of weekly subscriptions promised up to the present was 36*l.* 8*s.* 6*d.*, and donations had also been given amounting to 37*l.* 10*s.* 6*d.* It was stated that coals, bread, tea, coffee, &c., to the value of about 45*l.* had been distributed during the week under the superintendence of Mr. J. Gladwin, town missionary. A deputation from the Batley School Board attended to make an appeal to the committee for relief to the poor children attending the schools, and the clerk of the School Board was requested to furnish the committee with a list of the most deserving cases. The licensed victuallers, who have already made one distribution of goods, also held a meeting yesterday at the Town Hall. It was stated that upwards of 20*l.* had been collected by them, and another distribution at an early date was resolved upon.

Heckmondwike.

The local committee who have organised a fund for the relief of the distress caused by the severe weather commenced operations yesterday by distributing 40 gallons of soup and 160 loaves. The distribution will take place twice a week so long as the funds warrant and the cold weather lasts

Mirfield.

Last night, at a meeting of the Mirfield District Council, Mr. H. Roberts presiding, the surveyor reported that there was a great deal of distress in the district, and on the proposition of Mr. S. Walker, seconded by Mr. J. France, it was resolved unanimously that a committee be appointed to raise subscriptions and distribute the same as early as possible. Several members of the Board stated that their experience was that there was no more distress now than, if as much as, was usual in winter.

Pudsey.

The soup kitchen at the Pudsey Mechanics' Institute was again opened yesterday, over 200 applicants being supplied. Last night a carnival on the ice was held at Mr. Thomas Stead's pond, Hough Side, Pudsey. The Pudsey Brass Band played through the streets and a torchlight procession was formed. The proceeds are to be given to the Pudsey Relief Fund.

Forty Thousand People Starving.

A deputation representing the unemployed waited upon the Mayor of Birmingham yesterday to urge him to forthwith open a Mayor's Relief Fund. Mr. Stevens, who introduced the deputation, said that there were 15,000 workers out of employment in Birmingham, representing with their families 40,000 starving persons. There has never been such destitution in Birmingham since 1878, when Mr. Jesse Collings, then Mayor, opened a fund.

The Distress.

"*Bradford Observer*" *Relief Fund.*

The following contributions have been received to this fund, in addition to those previously acknowledged, the total now amounting to 671*l.* 12*s.* 9½*d.*

General Fund.

	£.	s.	d.
Amount previously announced	469	8	7½
F. R. Eeles	–	10	6
G. R. Tetley, Wellingborough	5	–	–
Titus Hall, Clark	–	10	–
C. Edmondson	–	5	–
George Hetherington	2	2	–
Bayley & Holdsworth	–	10	–
Mrs. Finney	1	–	–
R. Peters	5	–	–
Poor-box at German Church	2	11	–
H. E.	–	2	6
A Friend	–	1	6
M. Swithenbank & Son	1	1	–
Some of the employés of L. N. Hardy & Co.	1	18	–
Employés, B. M. Co., Ltd.	1	11	–
	£. 491	11	1½

Cinderella Club.

	£.	s.	d.
Amount previously announced	135	8	3
Willie Glaser	–	10	–
Bertha Glaser	–	10	–
Emma Waterhouse	–	10	–
Friend	–	5	–
M. C. S.	1	–	–
Dinner Bell	–	2	6
A. B.	–	1	–
Frank Moore	1	1	–
Mrs. Samel Gath	1	1	–
Ninette and Darley	1	1	–
M. A. A.	–	2	6
The Misses Buckley	1	–	–
E. M. E.	–	2	6
Employés, J. Hopwood & Co.	–	10	–
Walter Bates	–	2	–
	£. 431	6	9

Rev. Mr. Roberts, Curate, Tong-street.

	£.	s.	d.
White Chapel Friends	–	2	6

The "Sheffield Daily Telegraph," Friday, 15th February, 1895.

INCREASING DISTRESS.

Local and other Relief Movements.

The saddest feature of the excessively severe weather is the increasing distress not only amongst the very poor, but mechanics, and others, deprived of work by the frost. Relief is being very generally organised, and a notable donation to the distresed poor is that of Leith Town Council, which yesterday voted 100*l*. Mrs. Mitchell South, Leith Manse, has arranged to provide the unemployed with daily dinners.

The Leeds unemployed yesterday called upon the Corporation to adopt the eight hours system throughout their departments, and expressed regret that a man should have been allowed to die of starvation in the town.

The Mayor of Gravesend has opened a distress fund. River traffic is still at a standstill at Gravesend, and yesterday several large cement factories closed until the weather breaks, thus increasing largely the distress, which has already reached an acute stage.

In yesterday morning's "Telegraph" it was stated that Mr. Marmaduke Wardley contribued 50*l*. to the Mayor's Relief Fund. The name should have been "Wardlow."

Meeting in St. Peter's Ward.

A meeting was held at the Cutlers' Hall yesterday for the purpose of considering the distress prevailing in St. Peter's Ward occasioned by the prolonged severity of the weather, and to take steps towards rendering relief. Councillor Alfred Taylor (St. Peters) presided, and there were present Alderman W. E. Clegg, Councillors G. F. Lockwood, W. Nuttall, R. Styring, John Maxfield, H. Pawson, and Duncan Gilmour; the Revs. R. H. Hammond, W. J. Morrison, C. F. Knight, C. H. Maggs, J. S. Pite, J. J. West, G. E. Watt Smith; Mr. Skelton Cole, J.P., Dr. Hunt, J.P., Messrs. J. J. G. Tuckwood, John Walsh, H. L. Brown, Jonathan Taylor, and W. Bracecamp. Letters of apology were received from Canon Walshaw, the Rev. J. Gilmore, Rev. Father Brady, Colonel J. E. Bingham, Alderman Bramley, Messrs. H. Hughes, S. Hoyland, and W. Cockayne. Mr. Nuttall, the convener of the meeting, said he had received 25*l*. from the Mayor's Relief Fund towards carrying on the work of the relief in the ward. The distress was terribly acute, and it was absolutely essential that the work should be commenced as soon as possible. Mr. Skelton Cole was elected treasurer, and the Rev. C. H. Maggs secretary to the committee. A discussion took place on the question of amalgamating the committee with other committees working in the same ward, and it was agreed to leave the matter open until the committee had been formed and set to work. The following were constituted a committee:—The Revs. R. H. Hammond, C. F. Knight, W. J. Morrison, J. E. Manning, J. J. West, James Haigh, Father Brady, Father Leteux, Councillors G. F. Lockwood, W. Nuttall, John Maxfield, R. Styring, Alfred Taylor, H. Pawson, Messrs Jonathan Taylor, W. Bracecamp, C. Kramer, R. Wynn, J. Thackray, and H. L. Brown.

St. George's Ward.

The St. George's Ward Branch of the Mayor's Relief Committee met at the Town Clerk's office, yesterday, when, in order to prevent overlapping in relief distribution, the ward was divided into polling Districts. For the Jericho polling district, the Rev. Dr. Hicks, Mr. Allflat, the Rev. E. Bonfellow, the Rev. J. Ninnis, and the Rev. J. Turley were appointed; Redhill, the Rev. Dr. Hillier the Rev. H. J. Boyd, the Rev. Father Brady, the Rev. Father Leuteux, and the Rev. L. A. Ward; and Mount Zion, the Rev. J. C. Ommanney, the Rev. H. O. Rattenbury, the Rev. J. Ross, and Mr. Thomas Graham; each branch having power to add to its numbers. Mr. J. R. Lockwood and Mr. W. F. Wardley were appointed secretaries for the ward. It was decided to give the Jericho and the Redhill committees 15*l*. each, and the Mount Zion 10*l*.

Brightside Ward Relief Committee.

The work of relieving the acute distress occasioned by the prolonged frost in this ward is now in full operation. Over 70*l*. has already been distributed in grocery tickets of the value of 1*s*. and 6*d*. each. The reports furnished by the visitors show that although the distress and suffering is not so widespread as during the coal war, yet the pinch is much more intense. In addition to the tickets, articles of clothing have been distributed to a large number of persons, mostly children, who were in a state of semi-nudity. Bundles of clothing will be thankfully received at the headquarters of the committee, viz., the Vestry Offices, Burngreave-road, or on receipt of an intimation addressed to the secretaries will be sent for. The articles mostly needed are for children, shoes, stockings, &c., but all kinds of clothing will be welcome.

Barnsley.

Mr. W. B. Cooper, secretary of the central fund for the relief of the distress in Barnsley, reports that up to the present time a total sum of about 300*l*. has been received for the relief of the distress, and about 100*l*. has been distributed in relief. The ward committees have been energetic and painstaking in their inquiries and in obtaining subscriptions, and it is probable that no really deserving case of distress arising from the weather has been overlooked by them, as they are men who know the wards, and they have, in addition, called to their aid the secretaries of the various trade societies. It is not intended to do much in the way of soup kitchens. Gifts of meat, bread, &c., have been made to the committee, and to utilise these a quantity of soup will be made at the Public Hall kitchen and distributed to school children on Saturday, but the establishment of a daily soup kitchen is not contemplated. It is expected that the plan which has been adopted will be continued until the end, if the means are forthcoming. On Tuesday a distribution of tickets available for use at any tradesman's shop in the town was made, single men receiving 2*s*., married, 2*s*. 6*d*., with 6*d*. each for children of school age. Between 500 and 600 were relieved on that occasion, but it is expected that fully 700 will come on the fund at the next distribution. The gentlemen who distribute the tickets have in all cases the assistance of the secretaries of the masons', bricklayers', labourers', plasterers', and other unions, and only those who are actually thrown out of work by the storm are relieved. The committee have received gifts of coal, flour, and bread from some friends, and at a meeting held on Wednesday it was decided that these should be distributed along with the tickets. The committee have not taken up the question of making special arrangements for the relief of school children whose parents may be thrown out of work by the frost, but Mr. J. R. Clark, school attendance officer, has been able to do something in this direction, making the money entrusted to him go a very long way.

Wirksworth.

The distress is being well looked after, and the old soup kitchen, which was opened on Tuesday, is distributing to about 200 families at the nominal price of one penny per quart. Coal, groceries, &c., are also being distributed, and Mr. T. Atkinson, the hon. secretary and treasurer, is well supported by the local gentry and tradesmen, who are working on his committee. Mr. J. Wheatcroft, J.P., gave 20*l*. towards the fund, and at one meeting there was raised 79*l*. Over 110*l*. had been received up to yesterday, and the committee has expended an old balance of 35*l*. from a previous relief works.

Tansley.

A committee has been working for the past three weeks at Tansley. Mr. J. H. Scholes is Chairman, and Mr. T. McMunn treasurer. Funds have been collected, and tickets are distributed in shops for food and coal. No money has been given up to the present. More than 20*l.* has been expended so far. Mr. J. A. Smith, nurseryman, has given to each of his workmen a load of coal, and delivered it at their houses. Mr. Scholes and Mr. W. Clarke Taylor have provided breakfasts to about 70 school children, and will continue to do so as long as the frost lasts.

Doncaster.

Yesterday, soup and bread were distributed to between 400 and 500 persons, who are suffering from the continued severity of the weather. Mr. F. W. Fison, the Unionist candidate for the division, has contributed 5*l.* towards the relief fund, and among other contributions handed over to the Mayor, is a balance from a fund for a complimentary dinner to Ald. Tockil in 1892, amounting to 2*l.* 10*s.* In addition, Mr. C. D. Clayton, of Broxholme House, is giving away 25 tons of coal, and Mr. R. J. Garrett is also giving 10 tons of coal to be distributed amongst deserving poor. The Relief Committee will to-day open soup kitchens for children in various parts of the town. Mr. S. W. S. Taylor, of Balby, is distributing a quantity of coals in Balby and Warmsworth.

Derby.

Owing to the continued severity of the weather, there is great distress at Derby. The Mayor's Relief Fund has reached about 500*l.*, and relief is being dispensed from that source as well as by many charitably-disposed persons in the town and district. At a meeting of working men, held in the Guildhall, a resolution was adopted affirming it to be the duty of every man earning wages to contribute towards the relief of their less fortunate townsmen, and a committee was formed to solicit subscriptions in the workshops and factories. It is 35 years since the Derwent was frozen over.

Cromford.

The distress caused by the severe weather has not been so keenly felt as in surrounding places, owing to the generous action of Mr. F. C. Arkwright, J.P., of Willersley, who has not only kept all his own workmen fully employed, but has also provided work for many of the Cromford men engaged in railway work, quarrying, &c., who have been temporarily thrown out of work by the prolonged frost. The Rev. E. Hacking has organised a Relief Committee, consisting of himself, as Chairman, Mr. W. Barker, Mr. G. H. Brown, Mr. A. J. Dawes, Mr. G. C. Gould, Mr. M. Hill, Mr. T. Parker, Mr. James Reeds, and Mr. H. Wheatcroft, each of whom contributed, and have undertaken to raise further contributions for the relief fund. Out of the fund thus raised, tickets for groceries, meat, coals, &c., have been distributed, and further distributions will take place whilst there is any need. At its last meeting the Relief Committee passed a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. F. C. Arkwright, whose action had done so much to relieve the distress.

Wakefield.

Yesterday a meeting, convened by circular by the Mayor, was held at the Town Hall to consider the best means of dealing with the distress now prevalent in the city. The Mayor presided, and there was a large and representative attendance. Mr. T. K. Sanderson strongly urged that the Board of Guardians should be asked to increase the amount given in relief to outdoor paupers, and the Ven. Archdeacon Doune, the Vicar, suggested that the City Council should give employment to as many working men as possible; that one or two more soup kitchens should be opened, and that free breakfasts should be provided for poor children attending the various elementary schools.—Mr. Edward Day, accountant, and Mr. Basil Briggs, solicitor, were appointed honorary secretaries, and a large committee was elected to work in conjunction with the Mayor to administer all funds. Upwards of 135*l.* was promised in the room, and it was mentioned that Sir Edward Green, Bart., Mr W. T. Marriott, J.P., of Sandal Grange, Mr. G. Stubley, J.P., Mrs. Fred Thompson, and some other generous friends, had done much to relieve the deserving poor.—The Rev. Father Moore said that if the Christian men of England did their duty and contributed 20 millions of money per year out of the total income of about twelve hundred millions per year we should have no periodical crises of distress.

Worksop.

Some hundreds of artizans and labourers are out of work, and the pits are on short time. All trades are affected by it. The Vicar of Worksop has been the means of raising a fund to meet the distress, and a soup kitchen, with other food distributions, has been started, and among those who have contributed to the fund are:—The Duke and Duchess of Newcastle 5*l.* 5*s.* each; the Duke of Portland, 5*l.*; Earl Manvers, 5*l.*; Countess Manvers 5*l.*; Sir Henry Watson, 5*l.*; Mr. F. J. Savile Foljambe, 5*l.*; Mr. Garside, 5*l.*; Messrs. Beckett and Co., 5*l.*; Sir Frederick Milner, 2*l.* 10*s.*; Mr. C. Tylden-Wright, 3*l.*; Mr. E. Thornton Berry, 3*l.* 3*s.* The amount up to Wednesday was 76*l.* 5*s.*

Brigg.

At Brigg the Rev. A. N. Claye (Vicar), Mr. H. Spring, Mr. W. P. Holmes, and others, have given a quantity of soup, and the local Relief Committee have distributed coals. The children of the unemployed have had a free tea and dinner given them this week by Mr. W. P. Holmes, and several members of the Wesleyan body gave a meat tea to the poor in the schoolroom on Wednesday.

Chesterfield.

Yesterday a meeting called by the Mayor (Alderman W. B. Robinson), at the request of the Council, was held in the Market Hall to take steps to alleviate the distress occasioned by the protracted severe frost. His Worship presided, and there was a large attendance, a great proportion of the audience being working men thrown out of employment by the weather. Among those present were Aldermen Wood, J. M. Clayton, and Plowright, and Councillors Locke, Marriott, Douglas, Robinson, Wardle, and Spooner, the Vicar (Canon Littleton), Mr. John Naylor, J.P., Dr. George Booth, J.P., Mr. P. H. Chandler, J.P., the Rev. Noel L. Aspinall, the Rev. E. S. Shuttleworth, the Rev. R. I. Mesquitta, the Rev. J. Gascoigne, the Rev. M. B. Stamp, Mr. W. H. Rangeley, Mr. J. Warner, Mr. Burcher, and Mr. W. E. Harvey.

On the motion of the Mayor, Mr. W. Hawksley Edmunds and Mr. W. Spooner were appointed secretaries of the meeting.

The Mayor said they would all agree it was high time some steps were taken to cope with the great distress that prevailed, and he was there that afternoon at the express wish of the whole of the Council. In some cases the distress was acute, and there must be hundreds of men in the borough who were willing to work to maintain themselves and families, but were unable to do so. He knew for a personal fact that a good many were in dire distress, their families lacking food. Some might think the Guardians should take the thing in hand, but they were bound by certain regulations in their action. There was one thing he would be most sorry to see as the result of the weather, and that was men compelled to part with their homes and furniture and go into the workhouse. (Loud cheers.) That was a calamity all of them would be only too willing to avert. Sheffield, he noticed, had set a good example in the way of helping the distressed under firms where there was full employment the men had

resolved to subscribe so much per week to the aid of their less fortunate fellow-workmen. If something of that kind were done in Chesterfield he thought it would be a good thing. (Hear, hear.) People in Chesterfield were not slow some time ago to help those whose work lay out of the town, and he thought the colliery owners might come forward now and render substantial assistance. His Worship concluded by moving "That a Relief Fund be started."

Mr. Joseph Warner seconded the motion, which was unanimously carried.

Letters of apology for non-attendance were received from Mr. Davies, Councillor Greaves, and Mr. C. F. Margereson.

The Mayor said the constitution of the committee was the next point, and he moved that the members of the Council be on it.

Mr. Edmunds thought it only right to mention what had already been done. The Charity Organisation Society, founded by Alderman Wood during his mayoralty, had been in operation for some time. They had had at various times to suspend operations through lack of funds, but they had a small balance of 16*l.* left over from the strike, and this, after consultation between the secretaries (Mr. Edmunds and Mr. Spooner) and Alderman Wood (the chairman), had been distributed under the resolution passed by the last general meeting of the committee. He hoped the committee, when appointed, would work. At the time of the strike a great many were put on the committee; but after the general meeting their faces were no more seen, and the work was left in the hands of about half-a-dozen.

Mr. Burched seconded the Mayor's resolution.

Mr. W. B. Robinson suggested a committee of seven from each ward, and the appointment of a sub-committee.

The Mayor's motion was carried.

Mr. Wardle proposed that the names of the ministers of religion be added to the committee, and this was seconded.

Alderman Wood said he would like to move an amendment. He had been hoping the necessity for relief would have passed away before now; but as one who had had as much to do with relief in Chesterfield as any man, he could not see what good they were going to do by proposing a gigantic committee. During the long strike, the distress was most acute for several months. An enormous committee was appointed, who never attended the meetings, and the work fell upon two secretaries, himself, Father Wurtzburg, and the Vicar. The other gentlemen dropped in promiscuously. If they were going to have a large committee like that they would never do any work. He suggested one member of the Council from each ward, the secretary of the Bricklayers' and Masons' Association, two Oddfellows, and two working men. If they were going to have all the Corporation, and the clergy of the district on the committee, it would mean all talk and no relief.

The Vicar seconded the amendment.

The Rev. E. S. Shuttleworth did not see how the amendment was in order, after the resolution had been carried.

On the motion of Mr. Whitelam, the resolution was rescinded, and Alderman Wood's motion was carried.

Mr. Lund, the Secretary of the Trades' Council, said the officers were present, and willing to offer any assistance.

Mr. Joseph Warner, on behalf of the Licensed Victuallers' Association, handed in a cheque for 21*l.* (Cheers.) If more were required, the association would come forward again.

Mr. Harvey was afraid the Trades' Council would have to act on independent lines, as the committee seemed so circumscribed. During the strike the Council raised 300*l.* for the relief of the distress.

Mr. Whitelam hoped the members of the committee appointed would let it be known the relief from their hands was from the funds, and not from them privately. ("Oh, oh!")

The Mayor: That is a downright insult to the Corporation. I won't have it. The members are above that

Messrs. Edmunds and Spooner were appointed joint secretaries to the fund, and on the motion of Alderman Clayton the Mayor was appointed to represent the West Ward, Alderman Wood the North, and Mr. Douglas the South.

Mr. C. P. Robinson thought the committee should have power to add to its number.

Alderman Wood disagreed, but the motion was seconded and carried.

On the motion of the Mayor, Mr. J. Naylor, J.P., was appointed treasurer to the fund. The following amounts were announced as having been received:—

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
The Mayor	20	–	–	Mr. Bright, Bank Close	5	–	–
The Licensed Victuallers' Association	21	–	–	Mr. Colledge	2	2	–
Mrs. Butcher	5	–	–	Messrs. Murphy and Sons	2	–	–
Mr. Dempsey	2	2	–	Mr. J. Walsh	1	–	–
Mr. Dronfield	3	3	–	Mr. Frank Stevenson	10	–	–
Mr. Rangeley, 20 tons of coal	—			Mr. P. H. Chandler	5	–	–
Messrs. Plowright	10	–	–	Mr. A. C. Locke	5	–	–
Dr. George Booth	5	–	–	Mr. Wardell, 40 stones of bread	—		
Mr. E. Eastwood	5	–	–	Messrs. Eyre and Sons, 40 stones of bread	—		

The first meeting for granting relief was held at six o'clock the same evening.

16 February, 1895.

COUNTIES IN DISTRICT.

Kent.

Surrey.
[Godstone.]

Sussex.

Sir,—With reference to your letter of February 13th, I have the honour to report that the returns which are forwarded to me weekly by the Clerks of the Unions in my district show that the number of paupers relieved is somewhat less than it was during the corresponding period of last year. In no Union is there any considerable increase, and with the possible exceptions of Dartford and Bromley, which are Unions adjoining the Metropolis, it may safely be said that in no part of my district has any exceptional difficulty been felt by the Poor Law authorities owing to want of employment for the labouring classes. Consequently, no exceptional measures have been necessary. At Dartford a stoneyard has been opened every winter for some years past, and at Bromley the Guardians generally think it necessary to relieve a certain number of able-bodied men with a labour test. The workhouses of both these Unions are becoming too small for the growing population, and plans for their enlargement are under the consideration of the Guardians.

The statistics of pauperism to which I refer do not, however, cover the last fortnight, during which time many labourers have been thrown out of employment by the severity of the weather. Nor do they give the number of men who have been relieved by Sanitary Authorities or by charitable agencies. Consequently, since I received your letter, I have asked for information on these points from many correspondents in all parts of my district, and their replies may be taken as representing pretty fairly the actual condition of things now existing.

Speaking generally, the distress which exists among able-bodied men is entirely the result of the frost, and has in both cases been met, and apparently adequately met, by private charity. In all the towns and in many villages Relief Funds have been started, and funds are readily subscribed, and, up to the present time, have been wisely administered. So far as the agricultural labourers are concerned, it is no longer the practice for farmers to turn their men off during unfavourable weather. Labour is scarce, and a farmer is now careful not to lose a good man. And I may be allowed, from my long experience in these matters, to express my conviction that the labourer is, generally speaking, more sober, more thrifty, and altogether more able to tide over an emergency of this description than

than he used to be. Shopkeepers are quite willing to give him credit, especially as they know that as soon as the frost breaks employment will be plentiful and well paid. The cheapness of food of every kind is another immense help. From Ashford, in Kent, the Clerk to the Guardians writes: "It is really surprising that no more distress has shown itself; but bread being so very cheap, I think the labourers are just able to feed their families; and last harvest and hop-picking were good for the labourers, though bad for the farmers." From the Isle of Thanet, which includes Ramsgate, Margate, and the neighbouring towns, and where private charity has been sufficient to meet the emergency, my correspondent writes: "This winter must be a very hard one for the poor, and I am of opinion that one reason why we do not get more applications for relief is because the poor have little trouble generally in obtaining credit from tradesmen on the understanding that the arrears are wiped off next harvest and hop-picking season." From country and seaside towns like Dover, where employment has up to now been exceedingly plentiful, Canterbury, Eastbourne, Hastings, Newhaven, Worthing, Chichester, Lewes, Horsham, Folkestone, and Sheerness, I hear that there has been no considerable number of applications for relief, and that such distress as exists is met by charitable contributions. At Sittingbourne and Faversham I anticipated that some exceptional measures would have to be taken by the Guardians or by the Municipal Authorities, as a large proportion of the population are employed in the brick fields and on the barges; but here also the men, who are exceptionally independent and thrifty, are living on their own resources supplemented by charitable relief funds. At Gravesend and at Tonbridge the Municipal Authorities, without starting regular relief works, have found a considerable amount of employment for the labourers. Relief funds are in active operation, and the applications for poor relief have hardly been affected.

In the Dartford Union, which includes Erith, and where, for several years past, a stoneyard has been open every winter, the Municipal Authorities have not started relief works, and there have been a large number of applications from able-bodied men, both married and single, for relief. These have been met by orders for the stoneyard, where there are now over 100 men employed.

From the Medway Union, which includes Chatham and Gillingham, the Board received last week an application to issue the Labour Test Order, and to empower the Guardians to relax the conditions of relief to able-bodied men under the Prohibitory Order. I attended the last meeting and advised the Guardians to give such relief as they thought proper, and to report all relief which was not in accordance with the Order to the Local Government Board for their sanction, under Article 7; I also recommended them not at present to start a labour test, but to deal with the exceptional and temporary circumstances in an exceptional and temporary manner. In the result a considerable relief fund has been started in Chatham, apparently with the effect of providing for the emergency, for, after the last meeting, only one case of relief given in contravention of the provisions of the Prohibitory Order was reported to the Board

The more helpless class of labourers have always a tendency to drift into the large towns of Brighton and Hove, where there are many charities. For some weeks past, from 100 to 200 men, a considerable proportion of whom are apparently able-bodied, have been walking in a procession through the town collecting money. It is alleged that many of these men were not residents in the town, and there have been many complaints of their proceedings from the inhabitants. The Brighton Corporation are now finding work for the unemployed, though not, I should judge, in a very systematic manner. The applications for Poor Law relief have not been affected. Formerly every winter the Brighton Guardians used to relieve able-bodied men by setting them to work on the workhouse grounds; but the plan caused many abuses, and an indoor labour test was substituted for it. This test, though it was apparently more favourable to the comfort of the men than the work in the open air had been, was not generally accepted, and the whole system of giving outdoor relief to able-bodied, as a matter of course, every winter came to an end.

The neighbouring town of Hove is in the Steyning Union, and here the distress appears to be somewhat acutely felt. The Clerk to the Guardians writes: "Last Board day we had eleven applications from Hove from able-bodied men, with families, out of work, and the Guardians of the parish agreed to form themselves into a committee and collect subscriptions, and deal with the matter. This they have done, and the Relieving Officer tells me they meet daily at his offices, and go into all the cases. They relieved 250 on Saturday last, and the Relieving Officer says that 350 have been relieved in all. I never knew so many men out of employment." There seems to be no want of charitable funds.

At Maidstone it is reported that there are 300 men out of work, and that the Urban Council have started relief works by opening a new quarry, laying a new sewer, and laying out a new playground, but there would appear to be some difficulty in employing all the men. This would appear to be the only case in this district where the Municipal Authority have started organised relief works, and I learn from one of my correspondents that works have not been altogether successful owing to the usual difficulty of confining the employment to the residents of the town, and preventing other men from coming in to share, and from the impossibility of getting a fair day's work in return for the wages given. No special relief fund has been started in the town, although money has been largely given to soup kitchens and other charities of the same kind.

It is evident, from the facts which I have stated in this report, that there is, so far as this district is concerned, no necessity for any change in the conditions under which relief is at present given to able-bodied men. The distress is, speaking generally, entirely caused by the severity of the weather, and it is evident that as soon as the frost breaks, employment will be exceptionally abundant, for large arrears of work will have to be made up. The Poor Law relief has not, practically, been affected, and charity is doing its proper work of relieving those who are in temporary distress. If in any particular Union charitable relief were to fail, the destitute persons would be entitled to come on the poor rates, and the question of modifying the Orders of the Board might properly be considered in relation to the special circumstances of each Union. At the same time, I ought to add that I have long been of opinion that there are points relating to the Orders of the Board which regulate the relief to able-bodied men which need careful consideration, and I hope to be able to address another communication to the Board on this question.

I have, &c.

The Right Honourable G. Shaw-Lefevre, M.P. (signed) *J. S. Davy*

Counties in District.

Cumberland. [Five Unions.]*

Lancaster.

Westmorland.

No. 11.—Lancashire District.

Mr. H. Jenner Fust.

Report as to— 17th February 1895.

I. The extent of destitution amongst able-bodied men in consequence of their being out of work.

II. Any exceptional measures which have been taken by the Guardians with a view to affording relief in such cases.

III. Funds which have been raised by means of charity for meeting the distress.

IV. Whether the present circumstances make it desirable to temporarily modify the Regulations of the Board with regard to outdoor relief in cases of able-bodied men out of work, and, if so, what modifications suggest themselves.

*The five Cumberland Unions are:—

Bootle, Cockermouth, Penrith, Whitehaven, and Wigton.

The remainder of Cumberland is Mr. Dawson's district.

Sir,

In accordance with your instructions, I have the honour to report as follows:—

I. and II.

The information at my disposal is wholly insufficient to enable me to form an accurate estimate of the extent of destitution in this district among able-bodied men on account of want of work, as distinguished from that existing among those whose work has merely been stopped by the frost, and who have work to go to when a thaw comes; but, on the whole, I am disposed to think that, putting the weather out of the question, there is not more lack of employment than is usual during the winter months.

Before the frost began the returns of pauperism in the district indicated no abnormal distress, the numbers receiving indoor relief in the last week in December 1894 being 625 more, and the number receiving outdoor relief 888 less than in the corresponding week of 1893, a decrease of 263 paupers on the whole, vagrants and lunatics in asylums being excluded.

The Liverpool Group of Unions, comprising Liverpool Parish, West Derby, and Toxteth Park, showed a decrease of 267 paupers; while the Manchester Group, comprising the Township of Manchester and the Unions of Chorlton, Salford, and Prestwich, showed an increase of 182.

The severe weather experienced since the beginning of the year has, of course, thrown many out of work, and the numbers receiving relief have increased considerably. There has, however, been no pressure upon the resources at the disposal of Guardians to cause anxiety, nor have exceptional measures been resorted to by Guardians to any extent.

At Kendal, the workhouse accommodation being insufficient, the Guardians have opened a stoneyard, but the number employed has not been great, and no single men have been relieved in this way. In a few other Unions men have been set to work under a labour test, but I do not think in greater numbers than usual.

The Manchester Guardians are in the habit of relieving, without imposing a labour test, a few special cases of able-bodied men destitute for want of work. Such relief is given, as a rule, for one week only, the workhouse being then offered. There has been lately a large increase in the number of men so relieved, and the Guardians will probably have to provide a labour test. The number relieved in the workhouse in the week ending 2nd February was 114, and the number receiving out-relief 421, in excess of the number relieved in the corresponding week of 1894.

The neighbouring Union of Chorlton, at the same date, showed 150 indoor and 409 outdoor paupers relieved in excess of last year. In this Union on 25th January the Relieving Officers did not know of any exceptional distress outside of Gorton and Openshaw, where the ironworks were "slack," but it was mentioned that men who had been earning 35*s.* and 36*s.* per week were applying for out-relief in consequence of a few days' frost. Since then the opinion of the Guardians seems to have changed, and great distress is spoken of, but whether mainly on account of the frost or not there is nothing to show.

In the Union of Salford the returns for the first week in February show, as compared with last year, an increase of 247 indoor and 178 outdoor paupers.

At the same date—

Liverpool showed an increase of	89	paupers.
West Derby a decrease of	75	,,
Toxteth Park an increase of	103	,,
Bolton ,, ,,	218	,,
Oldham ,, ,,	449	,,

As regards vagrants, the number relieved in the first week of January 1895 was 7,376, against 7,047 in the corresponding week in 1894, an increase of 329; but there has since been a further increase, and Manchester alone relieved last week 1,631, against 700 in the corresponding week last year.

III.

My information as to funds raised by means of charity for meeting the distress is very incomplete, but I may mention that soup kitchens appear to have been adopted in all the large towns.

In Liverpool the Lord Mayor, and the Head Constable, and others, have started Relief Funds, and large distributions of food have been made in many places throughout the city.

In Manchester the Chorlton Guardians, finding themselves unable to give relief without pauperising and disfranchising the recipients, telegraphed to the Board for permission to subscribe small sums towards the soup kitchens throughout the Union, but the Board considered there was no legal authority for the proposed expenditure. These Guardians also sent a deputation to the Lord Mayor of Manchester, asking that work should be found for the unemployed. This the Lord Mayor said it was impossible for him to do, but he has opened a Relief Fund "to relieve those who do not ordinarily apply for relief, and to prevent the stigma of pauperism, and the consequent loss of citizenship from attaching to those workmen, who, but for the exceptional weather, would have maintained their independence."

The

The Mayors of Salford, Blackburn, Burnley, Preston, and doubtless other places, have also opened Relief Funds, and the Corporation of Blackburn have determined to carry out at once as much work as possible, so as to find employment for those out of work.

In the Prescot Union the Clerk informs me that much has been done outside the Poor Law for the relief of the very great distress existing at St. Helens and Widnes, by reason of the depression in the chemical trade and glass manufacture. In St. Helens a special Distress Fund has been opened by the Mayor, and a sum amounting at present to 1,100*l.* is being carefully administered by the local Charity Organisation Society. This has considerably relieved the pressure on the Guardians.

The Corporation have pushed forward certain works of sewerage, and instructions have been given to their officials to put on extra casual men for any work that can be found from time to time.

The Corporation of Widnes, in response to an application in December last, have materially assisted the Guardians by finding direct employment for a number of men who must otherwise have sought parish relief. The numbers so employed up to 30th January and the amount paid in wages were :—

Week Ending	Number.	Wages.
		£ *s.* *d.*
December 12	23	1 17 9
„ 19	93	41 10 6
„ 26	105	42 5 9
January 2	128	65 15 6
„ 9	133	82 10 5
„ 16	123	73 6 4
„ 23	111	79 2 1
„ 30	97	53 5 10
		£439 1 2

The numbers of paupers relieved by these Guardians during January 1895 compare favourably with those relieved in the corresponding weeks of 1892 and 1894, and are only slightly in excess of those for 1893.

IV.

Of the 30 Lancashire Unions all, except Ormskirk, are under the Out-Relief Regulation Order, and of the 40 Unions comprised in the district only 9 are under the Out-Relief Prohibitory Order.

There is nothing in the present circumstances to make it desirable that there should be any temporary modification of the Board Regulations with regard to outdoor relief in cases of able-bodied men who are out of work.

The increase in the number whom the Guardians have found it necessary to relieve is marked but by no means such as to cause alarm. A break-up of the frost would send hundreds back to work in a few days, and, without wishing to underrate the distress, which undoubtedly exists, I see no reason to doubt that the ordinary machinery of the Poor Law will be able to deal with any applications for relief which are likely to be made.

I am, &c.,

(signed) *H. Jenner Fust, Jun.*,
Inspector.

The Right Honourable
George Shaw Lefevre, M.P.,
President of the Local Government Board.

REPORT on Destitution among Able-bodied Men.

District No. 10.

Nottingham, 17 February 1895.

To the President of the Local Government Board.

Sir,—I have the honour to report that in this district, containing the Union Counties of Derbyshire (less Ashbourne Union), Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, and Rutlandshire destitution among able-bodied men has not become prevalent. Agricultural Unions have seen little of it as a rule, and, speaking generally, distress has not materially increased the applications of that class for Poor Law relief or caused Boards of Guardians to take unaccustomed measures with a view to its relief. This immunity must, however, be partly attributed to timely assistance rendered by public and private charity, by which bountiful relief has been, and is being, afforded in the most distressed districts. I am under no apprehension that distress will cause any difficulty in administering the Poor Laws applicable to this class, and, though several of the new Boards of Guardians would be not unwilling to give outdoor relief for short periods to able-bodied men of good character temporarily out of work, I have no desire to advocate any alteration of the law in that direction.

COUNTIES IN DISTRICT.

Derby.
[Except Ashbourne, which is in Mr. Dansey's district.]
Leicester.
Lincoln.
Nottingham.
Rutland.

Only two Unions, Derby and Leicester, have opened stoneyards for labour test. Both did the like last winter. Leicester is not under the General Prohibitory Order, but Derby is so. The numbers of men so tested have been scarcely above twenty at a time in either of these two Unions, and in Derby Union the men's side of the workhouse is

is inadequate to the rapidly-increasing population, and is already over-full. The labour test in Derby is by no means a strict one as carried out. I do not mean to say that distress, other than the destitution applying for relief, had not become increasingly manifest among able-bodied working-men by last week. It certainly had become so, but towards the end of the week there was a rapid movement in organised charities to meet it in populous places. I do not, as I have shown, expect that any Board of Guardians will have to take any exceptional step; but if any such case should arise, it will probably be where a workhouse has become so overcrowded that the Guardians may deem it better for the sake of the inmates to start a labour test. I can conceive that to be possible in the case of one Union (Nottingham) which is not under the General Prohibitory Order. This report has of necessity dealt with the subject briefly and as closely as possible on Poor Law lines; but I would mention an instructive remark made by one experienced Union Clerk to me, viz., that several men in his Union are refusing work at 3*s.* a day, preferring to live on charity; and I am confident that it is impossible to be too strict in the precautions taken that those adequately relieved by the funds of organised charity are not at the same time obtaining relief from other public or private sources.

I have, &c.,

H. Stevens.

APPENDIX, No. 5.

PAPER handed in by Sir *Hugh Owen*, K.C.B., February 1895.

LETTERS received from Local Authorities in reply to the Circular Letter addressed to them by the Local Government Board at the request of the Chairman of the Select Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, of which the following is a copy:

Local Government Board, Whitehall, S.W.,
19 February 1895.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Local Government Board to state that they have received a communication from the Chairman of the Select Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, in which the Board are requested to issue a Circular to the Mayors of Towns and Chairmen of District Councils requesting information with the least possible delay on the following points:—

(1.) Whether there is any exceptional distress in the district, and how far this is due to circumstances peculiar to the locality or to the severe weather?

(2.) What is being done to meet the distress by Public Authorities or by voluntary agencies, and the average daily number relieved by each of the agencies during the week ended Saturday the 16th February?

(3.) Is an unemployed register maintained, and with what result?

(4.) Have you any suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving such distress?

The Board will be much obliged by your furnishing them at the earliest possible moment with the information required by the Committee, in as much detail as can promptly be given.

The Board rely on your immediately taking such steps as may be necessary for the purpose of furnishing the requisite particulars.

I am, &c.

The Mayor, or the Chairman of the District Council. (signed) *Hugh Owen*, Secretary.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

CAMBERWELL PARISH.

Population (1891), 235,344. Rateable Value (1892–93), £1,030,639.

Letter from *M. Wallace*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. IN my opinion there is exceptional distress due to the severity of the weather.

2. The vestry of this parish has been giving relief work, and the average daily number employed for the week ended Saturday, 16th instant, 205. For the previous week the daily average was 359 at 5*d.* per hour for an eight hours' day.

A special distress fund has distributed food in the shape of tickets throughout the parish, probably to the amount of about 200*l.* in all, for the last fortnight.

3. A register is kept of the unemployed who apply at the Vestry Hall for work, and the number of names now on that register is 1,950. The work is given by the vestry in rotation, and residents in the parish are selected as far as possible.

4. This vestry has passed many resolutions containing suggestions on this matter, which have been forwarded to the Local Government Board from time to time, and of which the Vestry Clerk can furnish copies if required.

PADDINGTON PARISH.

Population (1891), 117,846. Rateable Value (1892–93), £1,323,142.

Letter from *Frank Dethridge*, Vestry Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THE applications for employment in Paddington this winter, as will be seen by the enclosed return, show a decrease of 38 per cent. upon the number of applications made last year.

2. Certain works have been carried out at the Paddington Recreation Ground from 5th October until stopped by the frosty weather on the 9th instant, employing an average number of 35 labouring men weekly, during which period the wages paid varied from 4½*d.* to 6½*d.* per hour, the majority being paid 5*d.* per hour.

From the following statement it will be seen that 3,284 casual labourers have been engaged at snow clearing, in addition to the regular staff of the vestry, the remuneration being at the rate of 5*d.* per hour :—

2 January	-	95	1 February	-	678
3 „	-	31	2 „	-	594
13 „	-	179	6 „	-	308
22 „	-	393			
23 „	-	381			
28 „	-	572	Total	-	3,284
29 „	-	53			

3. An unemployed register is kept at the works department; but at this season of the year, especially if the weather be frosty, it is most difficult to find employment for the regular hands; masons, paviors, masons' labourers, road pickers, &c., as a rule being prevented from executing their usual employment, and consequently filling up their time by doing odd jobs.

4. I am not prepared to make any suggestions with reference to this item.

(Return before referred to.)

Total Number of Applicants applying for Employment, for Three Years ending December 1894.

Total for the Year ending December	Masons.	Painters.	Carpenters and Joiners.	Smiths and Farriers.	Carmen.	Horsekeepers.	Bricklayers and Plasterers.	Shoemakers.	Gardeners.	Bakers.	Gas Fitters.	Harness Makers.	Wheelwrights.	General Labourers.	Messengers.	Porters.	Total Number of Applicants.
1892	2	11	2	8	15	5	6	2	2	–	1	1	–	168	–	–	223
1893	23	33	7	18	66	13	4	6	5	2	2	3	2	311	–	–	495
1894	5	16	6	7	41	3	1	6	3	4	–	–	–	207	6	4	309
1895, from 1 January to 16 February.	–	–	–	1	5	–	–	–	4	–	–	–	–	21	–	–	31

Wandsworth District Board of Works.

Population (1891), 156,942. Rateable Value (1892–93), £1,090,626.

Letter from *B. Weir*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. There is some exceptional distress in this district, due to the severe weather.

2. As in previous winters this Board are doing what they can to find work for the unemployed. The making up of several roads, and the construction of a sewer was ordered a few weeks ago, but owing to the frost, these works have been practically at a standstill. The Board have employed as many men as possible in removing snow, sanding roads, &c. The average daily number so employed, exclusive of those already in the employment of the Board, during the first three days of the week ended 16th February was 19; during the last three days none were so employed. In fact, owing to the frost, the Board have had difficulty in finding work for their regular men. The average daily number of men (exclusive of the Board's regular men), employed as above mentioned, during the week ended 2nd February was 481, and the average daily number for the week ended 9th February, 108.

The Guardians of the poor of the Union have opened a stoneyard for the unemployed.

Some relief is given in money, coals, soup, &c., by philanthropic societies in various parts of the district.

3. The Board in January 1894 opened a free labour register at Wandsworth, and kept it open for three months, during which time 165 men and 35 women were registered. Handbills were circulated and posted throughout the district giving notice thereof, but only eight employers of labour inspected the register, and the only person who found employment through its agency was a domestic servant. The Board do not think that any good result would be obtained by re-opening the register.

4. Local authorities should carry out as much of their work as possible during the winter, but, as is pointed out above, with regard to many of these works, it is practically impossible to proceed with them in time of severe frost.

II.—COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Bath County Borough.

Population (1891), 51,844. Rateable Value (1892-93), £291,292.

Letter from *J. Stone*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. There is always in this city a certain amount of distress in the winter, caused by artizans being unable to pursue their usual avocations in consequence of the weather, and although in consequence of the continuance of the frost this year such distress may be considered exceptional, it does not prevail to such an extent as to be unable to be coped with.

2. So

2. So far as can be judged from information received from parochial organisations the existing distress has been fairly dealt with by such organisations up to the present time. A central relief fund was started by the Mayor in the middle of last week, with a view of supplying coal, soup, and bread, to persons in need. On Thursday, 14th instant, 86 gallons of soup were distributed, on Friday 190, and on Saturday 163. A pint of soup was distributed to each individual, so that this would represent a daily average of 1,170 persons relieved from the mayor's fund. To each person receiving soup was delivered about two pounds of bread. With a view of lessening the pauperising influence of the distribution, every person applying was required to pay one half-penny for the soup and bread.

Besides the food thus distributed through the Mayor's fund, I am informed that on Friday 150 pints of soup, and on Saturday 157 pints were distributed through the ordinary soup kitchens. On Friday also 328 pints of soup were distributed through other charitable organisations. In addition to this the committee of the Bath Homœopathic Hospital have been daily supplying 80 persons with soup and bread.

As to what may have been done through parochial organisations I am unable to furnish any report, but, if it is desired, details could no doubt be obtained as to this. With respect to what has been done by public authorities, I may say that the committee having charge of the public highways issued a notice on Wednesday that they were prepared to employ men out of work in breaking stones, and that on Thursday 11 men were so employed and on Friday 40.

In addition to this the committee having charge of the public pleasure grounds gave notice that they were prepared to employ men out of work in levelling the playground in the Upper Bristol-road. On Friday and Saturday in last week 60 men were so employed, and during the present week 100 have been engaged. The number of applicants exceed the number that can be employed, and it has been arranged that the men shall work in shifts of three days each, preference being given to married men with families. The men so employed belong to all sorts of trades.

3. A register of unemployed has been kept at the Guildhall for upwards of two years, but so far as can be ascertained it is of very little value.

4. I have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving the present distress, further than saying that, so far as I can judge, there is very great danger of persons quite unworthy of being relieved receiving assistance from several agencies at the same time, but how this is to be avoided is an exceedingly difficult question.

Blackburn County Borough.

Population (1891), 120,064. Rateable Value (1892-93), £428,134.

Letter from *R. E. Fox*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in the district of the Borough of Blackburn at the present time. There are two causes of this distress—

(*a.*) Depression in the cotton trade, which is the staple trade of the town; and

(*b.*) The prolonged frost.

2. I enclose you copy of resolutions passed at a meeting of the general purposes committee of the Town Council, which will show you what the Corporation are doing in order to relieve the distress, which resolutions are being carried out. In addition the Mayor about a fortnight ago opened a public subscription for the purpose of relieving the distress, the amount received up to the present amounting to 1,750*l.* The relief is administered in the form of soup and bread, &c., which is distributed from various soup kitchens which have been opened in the town. The soup has been distributed daily since the 9th instant, except on Sundays. The total number of families relieved daily for the week ending Saturday, 16th February, being about 3,000, which on the average of four persons to a family will represent 12,000 persons daily.

In addition to the distribution of soup, the more respectable portion of the poor received tickets value 2*s.* 6*d.* each for the purchase of food, which are honoured, on presentation, at any shop or store in the town. 500 tickets of the value of 2*s.* each have also been distributed for the purchase of coal. The amount of relief which is being given from the Mayor's fund altogether amounts to about 500*l.* per week. Prior to the opening of the Mayor's fund, two private donations of 1,000*l.* and 100*l.* respectively were distributed in the town by the various clergymen and the Mayor in the form of 2*s.* 6*d.* tickets.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The Corporation cannot make any suggestions at present for relieving distress, beyond the steps they have taken.

(Resolutions above referred to.)

(1.) That it be an instruction to the highway and scavenging committees to employ, as soon as there is a thaw, as large a number of men as possible in clearing away the snow and dirt from the highways, streets, and back roads. The men employed to work in day shifts.

(2.) That it be an instruction to the Borough Engineer to carry out at once the re-paving works in the bed of the river Blakewater under Salford Bridge now mentioned, and to employ as many of the unemployed as he can in day shifts, along with a number of the Corporation's own workmen.

(3.) That it be an instruction to the Borough Engineer to carry out any works which are practicable at this season of the year, such as cleansing weirs in the river Blakewater, painting under bridges or any other work which should from time to time be found necessary, and to employ as many of the unemployed in carrying out such works in day shifts as he can. Also that it be an instruction to the waterworks committee to supply water where necessary for re-filling any weirs after cleansing.

(4.) That the chairmen of the various committees be appointed a special committee to give directions from time to time to the Borough Engineer in reference to carrying out such works as before mentioned.

Bootle County Borough.

Population (1891), 49,217. Rateable Value (1892–93), £429,706.

Letter from *B. S. Johnson*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. So far as this borough is concerned, the distress now prevailing is due to the severe weather. Work at the docks has been good for some time past, and with the expected arrival of cotton steamers it is hoped that employment will continue plentiful.

2. During the severe weather of the past two weeks arrangements have been made for relieving distress. The work of administering the public fund for this purpose is performed by the officials of the Council. The average daily number of families relieved from this fund during the week ended Saturday the 16th February was 59. In addition thereto, for several months past in accordance with an annual practice in this borough, about 130 children have been supplied with a daily meal out of a fund administered by the police. For the past week a number of private agencies for relieving distress have also been at work.

3. An unemployed register was commenced last year and continued for four months, but the small number of persons availing themselves of it rendered its continuance futile.

4. From what has already been said it will appear that a change in the weather will meet present requirements.

Derby County Borough.

Population (1891), 94,146. Rateable Value (1892–93), £396,799.

Letter from *H. F. Gadsby*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in the Borough of Derby, which is not due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, but to the severe weather.

2. To meet the distress the Council have employed a number of men who were out of work in removing the snow and cleaning the streets. They have also let a large contract for painting the Borough Asylum. As to the voluntary agencies, I may inform you that the Mayor has opened a relief fund, the subscriptions to which have amounted to 939*l*. The administration of the relief being left in the hands of committees composed of well-known gentlemen in the borough, who, in addition to giving away large quantities of soup and bread, are giving pecuniary relief to the most necessitous cases. The average daily number relieved by the various committees during the week ended Saturday, 16th February, was 220. This number does not include wives and children who may be dependent upon married men.

3. Two years ago a free labour registry was opened, and it was so little patronised that it was soon abandoned, and has not been opened since. Since that time the question of re-opening such registry has been considered, but it has not been thought necessary to take steps in that direction.

Grimsby County Borough.

Population (1891), 51,934. Rateable Value (1892-93), £169,568.

Letter from *W. Grange*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. There has been a number of labourers and men employed in the building trade out of work at Grimsby in consequence of the frost, but otherwise there has not been exceptional distress.

2. The Town Council issued handbills for the unemployed to make application to the Borough Surveyor, who would endeavour to find temporary employment in removing snow, cleaning the roads, &c., and in the corporation works.

3. An unemployed register is kept at the town hall, and about 350 men have applied for work, and about 320 of the number have been temporarily employed.

4. Soup has been very liberally supplied by various inhabitants to all applicants. The necessitous board school children have been supplied in the school premises with free dinners paid for by subscription, and one penny dinners to such children as prefer to pay. About 700*l*. has been raised by public subscription for the relief of the widows and children of the fishermen lost during the recent gales from this port, so that they are properly cared for. The Corporation are doing their very best to find employment for the needy, and there is a very earnest desire amongst the tradesmen and merchants to do all that is possible to meet the difficulty.

A special committee of the Town Council has also been appointed, and is doing good work in superintending this matter.

Kingston-upon-Hull County Borough.

Population (1891), 200,044. Rateable Value (1892-93), £730,725

Letter from *C. Richardson*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this borough, and it is largely due to the severe weather.

2. There are numerous voluntary agencies in the town for relieving the distress, including the police, who have, with my concurrence, been utilised for the purpose, with most excellent results. The average daily number of cases relieved at the various police stations during the week ending Saturday, 16th February, has exceeded 2,000, but I am unable to state the number relieved through other agencies.

3. There is no register of unemployed at the town hall, but I believe that registers are kept by the various trades unions and other societies in the town; and employers of labour have no difficulty whatever in obtaining any number of men they require.

4. I cannot too strongly recommend the employment of the police for the purpose of distributing relief, as they are acquainted with the distress within their beats, and their organisation and knowledge of the inhabitants specially qualify them for the work. If I am invited to make suggestions for the purpose of relieving distress in the sense of removing its cause, I unhesitatingly recommend that steps should be taken to prevent excessive drinking.

Portsmouth County Borough.

Population (1891), 159,251. Rateable Value (1892-93), £629,936.

Letter from *T. King*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. The distress in chief in this borough arises from the severe and inclement weather we are now receiving. In other respects, in my opinion, the distress is normal.

2. The only action taken by public authorities is that of the Board of Guardians, who are employing labour at "union" rates. An application for a loan of 500*l.* to apply for relief having been declined by Government officials, I have instituted a "relief fund," which is receiving general support, and, I am glad to say, I have reached nearly 1,000*l.*, which is being distributed by means of ward committees under my supervision, and, as far as possible, relieving men thrown out of work by this inclement weather, and other necessitous cases.

3. I am not aware of any register of the unemployed being kept, excepting that of the trades unions, with which I am not associated.

4. I am relieving as far as my fund admits, and shall be glad of any assistance your Board can offer.

Preston County Borough.

Population (1891), 107,573. Rateable Value (1892-93), £356,062.

Letter from *W. H. Woods*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. There cannot be said to be exceptional distress in this town. What distress there is is due to the prolonged exceptional frost, and is chiefly among out-door labourers.

2. This distress has been met by myself, in co-operation with several gentlemen, establishing soup kitchens, supplies of coal, and of clogs. No returns of relief have been kept.

3. No unemployed register is maintained, careful inquiry as to the need of such, both by the Mayor and the trades council, demonstrating there was none.

4. No suggestions to make.

ROCHDALE COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 71,401. Rateable Value (1892–93), £274,978.

Letter from *W. Hardman*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE appears to be not much exceptional distress in the district; of course, out-workers have felt somewhat keenly the severe weather.

2. Large numbers of children are being almost daily provided with dinners, &c., through voluntary agencies, which are also, I am pleased to say, rendering good service in other directions where it appears needful. I have myself distributed a number of tickets entitling the recipients to a certain quantity of coal, coke, and food. As the relief afforded is entirely voluntary, I cannot give you any very accurate figures.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. As the present voluntary efforts seem to be coping successfully with any distress which may exist, I do not see any necessity for me to make any suggestions on the matter at present.

SHEFFIELD COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 324,243. Rateable Value (1892–93), £1,125,122.

Letter from *J. W. Pye-Smith*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, but it is entirely due to the severe weather which has existed since the end of December last.

2. The Mayor has started a public relief movement towards which the sum of 1,300*l.* or 1,400*l.* has already been subscribed, and he is distributing that fund in the various districts of the city through local committees appointed for the purpose. I have not yet received returns from the districts which would enable me to ascertain the average daily number relieved by each of the committees for the week ended Saturday the 16th of February.

3. An employment register has been maintained here for the last two or three years, but inasmuch as the very cause (the weather) which has occasioned the exceptional distress, has also shut up the sources of employment under the control of the Corporation, that register is not of much service now because employment cannot be found to any great extent, excepting in the cleansing of the streets.

4. The Mayor has no particular suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving the distress, beyond saying that the cause of the distress is of such nature as to make it absolutely essential that a fund should have been raised to enable those suffering to obtain grants of food or clothing to help them through the time of distress caused by the very severe weather.

SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 65,325. Rateable Value (1892–93), £265,182.

Letter from *H. M. Gilbert*, Hon. Secretary, Mayor's Distress Fund, 20th February 1895.

1. THE distress which exists in our town is due to the inclement weather which prevents work being done.

2. We have executive committees in each of our 10 wards, and have relieved upwards of 500 persons up to 16th instant.

3. We endeavour to search out cases of distress as well as relieve those which are brought to our notice.

SUNDERLAND COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 131,015. Rateable Value (1892–93), £477,209.

Letter from *J. Sanderson*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the borough due to (1) the present depression in all trades especially that of the staple industries of this town, viz.:—Shipbuilding and Shipping generally, and (2) the severity of the weather since the 1st January last.

2.—(1.) £. 500 has been voted by the Town Council as an extra sum for removing snow from the streets. The average number of men thus employed daily during last week was 252 at 3*s.* 4*d.* per day. (2.) A relief fund was inaugurated at my instance eight days ago, and about 2,000*l.* has been subscribed which is being expended by a general committee in the form of parcels of groceries of the value of 1*s.* each to adults; 5,000 were thus relieved up to Saturday the 16th instant, and it has been determined to give a second distribution of 8,000 during the present week. (3.) In addition to ordinary relief the Board of Guardians supplied 546 families last week with groceries. (4.) Free breakfasts are being daily dispensed through the school board officers to children attending the public schools. The funds for this purpose are being raised by a separate and additional public subscription.

3. In each district a register is kept of the unemployed to whom relief is given.

4. The Council is endeavouring to provide such work as it reasonably can, and a special committee has been formed for that purpose, and it is hoped that by means of these several agencies, as the spring advances, the distress will be materially lessened.

Swansea County Borough.

Population (1891), 90,349. Rateable Value (1892–93), £327,000.

Letter from *W. H. Edwards*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this district, and the same is largely due to circumstances peculiar to the locality. The steel and tin-plate industry being at present at a perfect stand still, resulting in no less than 4,450 men being out of employment; 2,000 labourers and hauliers are also out of employment by reason of the stoppage of the different works; and, on account of the severe weather, at least 1,200 masons and carpenters are now unemployed.

2. As to what is being done to meet the distress, the Swansea Town Council have employed upwards of 250 men in the performance of extraordinary works; and, as the result of voluntary agencies, subscriptions have been invited and received, and soup kitchens established in different parts of the borough for the relief of the unemployed. No less than 2,215 mid-day meals for the unemployed are provided daily.

3. An unemployed register has been opened, and work provided so far as circumstances will allow.

4. As to relieving the distress, I would venture to suggest that if the unemployed were engaged in the construction of light railways, which are much needed in the Gower Peninsula, and if work were provided for them in constructing a harbour of refuge at the Mumbles, fortifications for the protection of the mouth of the Bristol Channel; and if the War Office could see their way to issue orders for the Militia and the Reserve Forces to do their annual training during such times as those we are now passing through, the prevailing distress might be considerably relieved.

Walsall County Borough.

Population (1891), 71,789. Rateable Value (1892–93), £185,820.

Letter from *J. Noake*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this borough owing to the depressed condition of our staple trade of saddlery, and the various other trades allied therewith, for several years past, which has been intensified during the past month by the severe weather, in consequence whereof a large number of out-door workers, such as bricklayers and labourers, have been thrown out of employment.

2. The Corporation have given employment to as large a number as possible in clearing away snow and sweeping the thoroughfares when practicable, but this was found to be totally inadequate to the number demanding relief. The Guardians of the poor have also been liberal in giving relief in all cases where it was possible for them to do so without unduly straining the law. As, however, there were a large number of persons, not of the pauper class, who required assistance, I convened a meeting of the inhabitants about a fortnight ago, and raised by voluntary subscriptions, a fund which now amounts to 560*l.* for their relief. This fund is administered by a representative committee, who employ visiting officers, and sit daily to investigate cases and administer relief to deserving ones. This is done by issuing a ticket to the applicant entitling him to obtain from any tradesman provisions or coal to the value stated in the ticket which varies with the number of the applicant's family, but in no case is more than 10*s.* 6*d.* allowed in one week. During the week ended the 16th instant, the number of cases relieved was 762, representing 3,048 persons, and there were distributed tickets representing in value 235*l.* 16*s.* 1*d.* In addition to which there were given away 240 loaves, and 397 grocery tickets (value 7*d.* each), the gift of different tradesmen. On the 18th and 19th instant the committee relieved 395 cases, at a cost of 93*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.*, and in addition, distributed 200 loaves of bread, 105 grocery tickets (value 7*d.* each), and 68 coal tickets (value 1*s.* each).

3. No unemployed register is maintained, as from experience on former occasions it has been found to be practically useless. A register is, however, kept of all applicants for relief, and also a record of the relief granted.

4. The only suggestion I can make for the purpose of relieving the distress is that the Guardians should be authorised to grant relief by way of loan, with power to recover the amount by summary proceedings before the justices, who should be empowered to commit, in default of payment, when it is proved to their satisfaction that the person relieved has had the means to repay.

Wolverhampton County Borough.

Population (1891), 82,662. Rateable Value (1892–93), £273,846.

Letter from *C. T. Mander*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this district, due more particularly to the severe weather, and also partially to circumstances peculiar to the locality.

2. The distress is being met by voluntary agencies, the result of a "private" and also "public" appeal made by me. In response to my appeals the sum of 1,160*l.* has been received. Of this amount 1,012*l.* (purchase of coal and groceries, 772*l.*; men employed in removing snow from streets, 240*l.*; total, 1,012*l.*) has been spent in relief. At my suggestion the town has been divided into wards, and the representatives of each ward, aided by influential inhabitants, have made a house-to-house visitation for the distribution of relief tickets, which entitle the recipients either

either to coal or groceries. It is scarcely possible to give the daily number relieved during the week ended 16th February, but the total number of families relieved was 2,500. Relays of men, numbering from 20 to 500, have been engaged in removing snow from the streets at a wage of 1*s.* for every daily turn of four hours for each person. The sum of 240*l.* has been expended in this direction, and employment found for the men for 17 days.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The suggestion I have to make for the purpose of relieving such distress is such an amendment of the Statute Law and the rules and regulations of the Local Government Board (relative to out-door relief) as will enable the Guardians to meet emergencies arising from want of employment, due either to exceptional circumstances or to the severe weather, without pauperising or disfranchising the recipients of the relief. Some time ago an attempt was made in this borough to organize a Labour Bureau, but it proved futile. The Town Council, in my opinion, is not the authority to deal with the relief of the destitute, as they have neither the organization nor the means at their disposal. The Circular recently issued by the Board, dated the 11th February 1895, is impracticable in its requirements, and cannot be acted upon for the following reasons, viz., that even if the weather permitted it, the works described are such as could not be performed by all (whatever may have been their previous avocations), and would compete with the work of other labourers at present in employment. Further, even assuming that work could be found in the manner desired by such Circular, the cost thereof, by being charged upon the Improvement Rate (equivalent to the General District Rate) as distinguished from the Poor Rate, imposes a greater burden upon the ratepayers than they ought reasonably to be expected to bear.

III. BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Abingdon Municipal Borough (Berks).

Population (1891), 6,557. Rateable Value (1892–93), £21,143.

Letter from *B. Challenor*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

As regards this Town there is no exceptional distress, except such as is due to the severe weather which chiefly affects the building trade and agricultural labourers. At the present time the Urban District Council are employing those who are out of work in stone breaking and digging gravel. We do not keep an unemployed register as there is not a sufficient number of men out of work to render this necessary.

Appleby Municipal Borough (Westmorland).

Population (1891), 1,776. Rateable Value (1892–93), £8,935.

Letter from *C. R. Rivington*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. There is not any exceptional distress in this borough or the immediate neighbourhood thereof. 2. The long continuance of the frost has undoubtedly interfered with out-door labour, but no necessity has as yet arisen for exceptional measures of relief.

Banbury Municipal Borough (Oxford).

Population (1891), 12,768. Rateable Value (1892–93), £55,872.

Letter from *A. B. Field*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. There is no particular distress in this borough, except that temporarily caused by severe weather.

2. Gifts of coal have been made; soup kitchens and strong charitable societies have done all that is necessary for the weakly sufferers; widows, aged, invalided, &c. (some hundreds) have been relieved, and no deserving case has been overlooked.

3. An unemployed register is kept by our Surveyor, and has been taken advantage of by those who really want work, to the mutual advantage of master and man.

4. Our unemployed are put on to do some levelling in our recreation field. From 150 to 250 are thus kept off our streets, and no one has any excuse to beg. This relief work (at 2*s.* per day) has been looked upon by our honest working man as a great boon, and has kept distress from many doors. The loafer bars the operation, and is very down.

BARNSLEY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 35,427. Rateable Value (1892-93), £101,320.

Letter from *W. Woodcock*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

THERE is some exceptional distress in this district, and this is entirely due to the severe weather.

As Mayor, I convened a public meeting to organise a committee for the organisation of relief for the distress amongst the out-door workers, and in response to the appeal made a sum of upwards of 300*l.* has been raised, and is being distributed in kind by the committee amongst the unemployed.

No unemployed register is maintained.

I repeat that the distress is temporary, and solely due to the severity of the weather.

BEAUMARIS MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (ANGLESEY).

Population (1891), 2,202. Rateable Value (1892-93), £10,861.

Letter from *T. Hughes*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THE distress in this borough (which has a population of about 2,240) is owing both to want of work and the severe weather.

2. The Council as the local authority has given extra employment to as many as possible. Several benevolent persons give relief in kind.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

4. The Government should make some provision for relieving the distress, as local taxation is already a heavy burden.

BECCLES MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (EAST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 6,669. Rateable Value (1892-93), £21,947.

Letter from *E. G. R. Watson*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE has been a large number out of work owing to the severe weather.

2. I have employed them on our marshes (we have 700 acres) cutting down trees, sawing wood, &c.

3. Had soup kitchen open four days a week ; 1 cwt. coal tickets given to the old and infirm.

4. We can find work for our own unemployed and poor ; the difficulty is, agricultural labourers flock to the town.

BEDFORD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (BEDFORD).

Population (1891), 28,023. Rateable Value (1892-93), £116,910.

Letter from *George Wells*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this town, and it is entirely owing to the severe weather, which has stopped all work connected with building.

2. The Corporation have started relief works ; the number of men employed at present being about 150. A relief committee is also at work, and find that the voluntary contributions enable them to cope with the distress in the town. The number of families relieved in the town by this agency last week was 200.

3. A register of unemployed is kept at the Surveyor's office.

4. I find that the distribution of all funds is best left in the hands of the Charity Organisation Society.

BURY ST. EDMUNDS MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (WEST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 16,630. Rateable Value (1892-93), £57,140.

Letter from *F. C. Andrews*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

AT the monthly meeting of the Council held on Tuesday last the correspondence with your Board was discussed, and finding the unemployed, if set to work by the guardians, would be disfranchised, decided to open relief works at once, and a rate of one penny in the pound was levied for that purpose. Nevertheless, the Council think this work should be undertaken by the Board of Guardians, and the men supervised and paid by them, so that the expense should fall upon the poor rate. It is to be hoped that by another winter some steps may be taken so that the men can be set to work at once in case of emergency.

The following is the result. We commenced work at the Home Pits on the 14th instant :—On the 14th, 75 men stone raising : 15th, 100 ; 16th, 106 ; 18th, 115 ; 19th, 116.

In addition to this, we commenced pulling down some buildings which were formerly used at our old sewerage works, but now not required, being also very much out of condition. On this we had on the 14th, 6 ; 15th, 6 ; 16th, 6 ; 18th, 12 ; 19th, 12 ; chiefly bricklayers and labourers. We also decided to paint the inside of our Corn Exchange to find employment for painters. On this we had on the 16th, 11 ; 18th, 12 ; 19th, 11. Most of the men were married. As we could not find work for more, some single men (unless they were the mainstay of widowed mothers or other members of the family) were compelled to stand off, but these are not numerous. The great number of the men were out of employ through the long frost. A considerable number are loafers who do not seem to like settled employment, and others have migrated into the town from the adjoining villages because no employment is to be had there. If possible, some steps should be devised for getting the men back on to the land, and so relieve the pressure in towns. I may add : the men work from 9 to 1 and 2 to 5 o'clock ; we pay them 1*s.* 6*d.* per day at the stone pits ; the painters, 2*s.* 6*d.* per day, and their labourers, 1*s.* 6*d.* We do not keep an unemployed register. A great deal of assistance has been and is being given through the various parochial organisations and private charity.

CARNARVON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CARNARVON).

Population (1891), 9,804. Rateable Value (1892–93), £31,859.

Letter from *D. H. Jones*, Borough Accountant, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is at present considerable distress, mostly due to the severe weather.

2. At a meeting called by the Mayor it was decided to open a fund to assist the unemployed. The subscriptions then received, and afterwards collected by lady canvassers and others in the town, amounted to 232*l.* 8*s.* 9*d.* Number of cases relieved up to Saturday, 16th February (four days after the meeting above referred to), 400.

3. A register of cases requiring relief has been drawn out, with the object of having the same properly distributed under present circumstances.

4. The Mayor can offer no suggestion other than those acted upon in this town.

CHARD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 4,315. Rateable Value (1892–93), £15,199.

Letter from *J. Tucker*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.

2. Voluntary subscriptions have, however, been raised to meet such distress as there is, and the same have been used in making distributions of coal, bread, and soup amongst the aged, unemployed, and deserving poor. During the week ending Saturday the 16th instant, coal in quantities of 2 cwt. each were given to about 140 cases ; bread to about 50 ; and soup was given three times to about 120.

3. There is no register of the unemployed kept.

4. The only suggestions which the Mayor desires me to make are, that if distress continues or increases it should be met by a grant from the Imperial Exchequer, or by an order under which the public rates of the borough could be used to meet it, so that all the ratepayers should bear their share of the burden.

CHELMSFORD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 11,008. Rateable Value (1892-93), £47,662.

Letter from *F. Chancellor*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. I HAVE made inquiries, and I cannot learn that there is any exceptional distress in this borough beyond what might naturally be expected from the severity and continuance of the frost during the last fortnight.

2. In order to meet the distress caused by the weather throwing the mechanics in certain trades (more especially the building trade) out of employment, the Corporation has established soup kitchens in the borough, and during the last week about 2,700 quarts of good soup, made under the direction of, and served out by, members of the Corporation, together with bread, has been sold at the nominal price of one halfpenny per quart to those requiring assistance ; also supplemented by gifts of soup and coals by private individuals, and of coals provided by certain charities. I should add that the above soup kitchens are entirely supported by subscription.

3. We have not kept a register of the unemployed, but the Corporation has given employment to several extra men to clear the streets of snow and ice, and in dealing with road materials. I am informed that several men and lads earn money by keeping the ice clean and attending upon skaters in the town and neighbourhood.

4. I have no suggestions to make, but I believe the Corporation will continue their soup kitchens as long as may be necessary.

CHICHESTER MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (WEST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 7,830. Rateable Value (1892-93), £36,500.

Letter from *W. Smith*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress here, due partly to the drainage works having nearly reached completion, and a number of navvies and local workmen having been discharged in consequence, and partly to the severe weather.

2. To meet the distress, a local committee has been formed, and voluntary subscriptions obtained, with the result that it is hoped a sufficient amount has been procured to carry us through the winter. Soup, groceries, bread, and coal, are distributed in sufficient quantities to all who apply for them. This distribution is made three times a week. The average daily number of applicants relieved during the week ended Saturday the 16th February was 570, including children.

In addition to this, about 30 men had been previously given employment in road-making and other public works.

3. An unemployed register is maintained here. A report in reference thereto is sent herewith.

4. It is considered that the agency of the committee above referred to, and the other voluntary agencies of a private character at work in the city, sufficiently cope with the distress at present existing, and will, it is thought, meet the exigencies of the case during the present winter.

There has been no extraordinary demand for relief by the Board of Guardians. This, it is assumed, has been obviated by the voluntary agencies above mentioned.

(Report from Chairman of Board of Guardians as to Unemployed Register).

A register for the unemployed was opened at my office on 26th November last.

Till the frost occurred I had a good many workmen out of employment who registered, and I obtained work for 39 per cent. of them. Since the frost occurred, however, I have, generally speaking, been unable to obtain work, and, as a consequence, the men have not so freely registered. Beside the advantage of obtaining work for a considerable number, I had the extra advantage of gauging to some extent the amount of distress. It was, as you are aware, in consequence of the knowledge gained through the labour bureau that the soup kitchen was started, and many families saved from pauperism. I have also found this knowledge of some help to me as Chairman of the Board of Guardians. There is, however, this difficulty with regard to the bureau, viz., the want of earnest support from employers of labour. To make it a success at all one has more often to use one's own influence to get employment for the workmen, rather than the masters making application to the bureau ; but possibly when the object of the register is more fully understood this will be rectified.

CHIPPING NORTON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (OXFORD).

Population (1891), 4,222. Rateable Value (1892-93), £11,485.

Letter from *T. Mace*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this borough. Coal and soup have, however, been distributed to the poor during the severe weather.

No unemployed register is kept.

Dartmouth Municipal Borough (Devon).

Population (1891), 6,025. Rateable Value (1892–93), £17,679.

Letter from *R. O. Orme-Webb*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. Public soup-kitchen open twice a week, and all cases where help is needed are being helped by gifts of coal, bread, and tea, funds for the above having been raised by subscription subsequent to a Council meeting held on the 14th of February. Committee sits daily at the Guildhall from 11 a.m. to 12 noon to enquire into all cases presenting themselves for assistance.

3. Register kept by Surveyor of Works. Number of men presenting themselves and applying for work last week were sixty-nine; these are now working in shifts of three days each at the quarry preparing stone for highways, &c.

4. There is no need of further steps to be taken than those at present in force, which appear to meet all requirements.

Darwen Municipal Borough (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 34,192. Rateable Value (1892–93), £117,986.

Letter from *C. Costeker*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

The matter has been under the consideration of the Town Council, who have had generous offers of assistance from various quarters; but on the advice of their officers, they came to the conclusion that there was no exceptional distress in this district beyond what was due to the recent severe weather.

As to what has been done, the Borough Surveyor has said that he has offered work of the nature of clearing away the snow from the streets and highways to men standing idle at the street corners, who refused to accept such work.

As to outdoor labour generally in this district, it has not been bad this winter according to the report of one of the largest contractors in the town. The Corporation, therefore, are in this difficulty: that they are afraid, if they adopted relief works, undeserving people in the town and neighbourhood would take advantage of them, whereby probably more harm than good would be done.

There is no unemployed register maintained, because, as a rule, there are very few unemployed persons in Darwen.

The Corporation have given instructions to their Surveyor to give employment to as many men as he can during the severe frost, and a Relief Committee has been formed outside the Corporation to attend to the most pressing cases.

Daventry Municipal Borough (Northampton).

Population (1891), 3,939. Rateable Value (1892–93), £14,719.

Letter from *F. Willoughby*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

There is no exceptional distress in this borough.

Deal Municipal Borough (Kent).

Population (1891), 8,891. Rateable Value (1892-93), £30,570.

Letter from *A. C. Brown*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. Distress in the Borough of Deal is not at the present time very great, although undoubtedly a certain amount exists, due to the present severity of the weather.

2. My Authority propose to employ a large number of unskilled workmen to fill up the Sandown Castle Moat for purposes of Sea Defence, and in making up and widening roads. A number of ladies and gentlemen have all through the frost given free dinners to about 200 poor children daily, and the Mayor distributed bread, in the week ending the 16th inst., to 200 destitute old people. There is also a Soup Charity, from which two distributions were made last week, of 827 quarts amongst 273 families, at a charge of one penny per quart. There are three Preserved Provision Factories here, which employ a great deal of unskilled labour.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. The Mayor has no suggestion to make as to the best manner of relieving such distress. He has made an appeal to the public, which has been responded to in a very gratifying manner. It appears to my Council that it should be easier to obtain the consent of the Board to loans required for carrying out Relief Works, or, at any rate, that, if once started, there should be no question as to the Board's consent being given.

DENBIGH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DENBIGH).

Population (1891), 6,412. Rateable Value (1892-93), £32,025.

Letter from *J. P. Jones*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this borough in consequence of the severity of the weather.

2. During the week ended Saturday, the 16th instant, the Corporation of this borough employed 30 men at 2*s.* per day in levelling the surplus land in the Smithfield. Major Ffoulkes, of Erriviatt, has employed 21 men in making a new carriage drive, at an average wage of 2*s.* 4*d.* a day. During the same period soup and bread were distributed on three days, and 325 families were relieved with 240 quarts of soup and 325 loaves on each of the three days.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. I have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving such distress further than is now being done.

DEWSBURY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 29,847. Rateable Value (1892-93), £116,559.

Letter from *E. Mawdesley*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is existing at the present time exceptional distress in this district, principally among the class of people who are dependent for their livelihood upon outdoor employment. This distress is due principally to the severe weather.

2. The Mayor has inaugurated a fund, which is being liberally contributed to by voluntary subscription, for the relief of this distress. The committee having the management of this fund made distributions during the week, ending the 16th instant, of tickets entitling the recipients to flour, meat, potatoes, coal, and coke, in such quantities as were necessary in the discretion of the committee. The number thus relieved would be about 500 families. In addition to this, a club representing the Independent Labour Party have daily, for the last fortnight, given a free dinner to children first, afterwards to mothers, and afterwards to fathers, numbering, on an average, upwards of 500 per day.

3. The Dewsbury Tradesmen's Association have daily, for the last fortnight, provided tea for children whose parents are destitute, attending the several elementary schools in the town. Tickets for these teas have been distributed by the teachers at the schools to the children whom they knew to be in want. The number of children so relieved has amounted to several hundreds per day. All these three modes of alleviation of the distress are still continued, and will continue until after the severe weather terminates.

EASTBOURNE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (EAST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 34,969. Rateable Value (1892-93), £. 225,510.

Letter from *J. A. Skinner*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. EXCEPTIONAL distress has existed since the commencement of the frost in this district, and I have no doubt that it arises in consequence of the inclement weather.

2. The public authorities have discussed the possibility of finding work for the unemployed, but unfortunately the only work which can be carried out, viz., the proposed new drainage scheme, has been delayed by the Local Government Board failing to sanction the application of the Town Council for power to borrow the necessary money. I am happy, however, to say that the poor of the town are being provided for by voluntary agencies; in the three poor districts the Church agencies have been at work some time, and during the past fortnight I have myself opened a fund to provide relief during the exceptional weather. Soup, bread, coals, tea, and sugar are distributed daily through the Police at the Town Hall.

I cannot give you the numbers relieved by the Church agencies, but the numbers relieved through my own fund in the week ended February 16th were as follows:

	Persons relieved.	No. in Families represented.
Monday	167	968
Tuesday	175	1,000
Wednesday	196	1,151
Thursday	217	1,240
Friday	243	1,378

3. A register of unemployed workmen is not kept in this borough.

4. So far as Eastbourne is concerned, may I suggest that the Local Government Board should arrive at a decision as quickly as possible upon the application of the Town Council, made so far back as November last, for power to borrow 85,000*l.* for the new drainage scheme.

ECCLES MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 29,633. Rateable Value (1892–93), £113,336.

Letter from *G. W. Bailey*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THE Mayor is not aware that there is any considerable amount of distress in the Borough of Eccles but for the fact that the severe weather has stopped outdoor occupations and cut off the incomes of many, who, either by reason of having large families to support, or being of unthrifty habits, spend their weekly wages as they receive them, and put by nothing for a "rainy day."

2. The local authority have not felt themselves able to do anything to meet this temporary distress, as the kind of work in which they would have been able to employ the unemployed labour could not be carried on because of the frost, and thus unfortunately the paradox occurs that the reason for the distress is the reason why the distress cannot be alleviated. There are, however, voluntary agencies at work by means of soup kitchens and house-to-house visits, which are believed to have been adequate to prevent starvation. Eight hundred to one thousand persons (mainly children) are being fed by the soup kitchens daily, but no estimate can be formed as to the numbers relieved in the house-to-house visits which are made by numerous religious bodies.

3. No unemployed register is maintained, because in ordinary circumstances there are very few unemployed in the borough.

4. The Mayor does not feel that he is able to offer any suggestions.

EVESHAM MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 5,836. Rateable Value (1892–93), £23,316.

Letter from *G. Hunt*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress, due to the excessive rainfall experienced during December and January, followed by the recent severe frost, which has put an entire stop to out-door labour; and although the wages earned during the summer months (when whole families—men, women, and children find employment) should be sufficient to stave over such winters as this, they are, as a class, too improvident to provide for such contingencies. However, directly the weather breaks, there will be plenty of employment for all, and the distress will cease.

2. To meet the distress the public authorities constituted themselves a Relief Committee, making a house-to-house canvass for voluntary subscriptions, also from non-resident owners of property, and superintended the distribution of bread and coal tickets, of which there has been two distributions each week since the last week of January, or six distributions to the present time. The subscriptions received amounted to about 200*l.*, enabling the committee to make seven distributions. Besides this, other voluntary agencies exist for the provision of soup.

During the week ended 16th February the Relief Committee made two distributions, and the average number relieved at each distribution was 450.

I cannot obtain sufficient data for a return of voluntary relief privately distributed.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. I am of opinion that public authorities should be provided with means for the purpose of meeting such distress as at present exists (apart from the Poor Law relief), instead of being obliged to have recourse to the voluntary system of contribution.

The farm labourers of the immediate neighbourhood, unlike their fellow market garden labourers, are doing remarkably well; in fact, never so well during my recollection of fifty years. This is accounted for by the great increase in their wages, and their small allotments prove the greatest boon, as they can, at such times as these, fall back on the fat pig they are enabled to feed, and consume at home the corn and other produce their allotment supplies them with; they are far better off than many of the farmers themselves, these latter being the class for which some legislation would be desirable in order to relieve them from their desperate condition.

FALMOUTH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 12,791. Rateable Value (1892–93), £32,940.

Letter from *H. Liddicoat*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is considerable exceptional distress, mainly due to the continued severe weather, all out-door employment being practically impossible.

2. The Town Council are employing a number of men in improving district roads and generally repairing damage caused by recent gales. There is also a voluntary effort, and a Distress Fund is raised; about seventy families have been daily relieved since the 13th inst.

3. An unemployed register is maintained; the result of 118 applications is made, and employment has been found for 55 on Corporation and other works.

4. We have to suggest that, as local effort will be exhausted in a few days, a grant be made from the Imperial Exchequer.

FAVERSHAM MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (KENT).

Population (1891), 10,478. Rateable Value (1892-93), £43,220.

Letter from *F. F. Giraud*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district due to the severe weather.

2. The distress is being met by voluntary agencies. 1,200 persons were relieved by such agencies during the week ended Saturday, 16th February, namely :—

Soup and Bread	to -	390	3 times
„	„ -	60	twice
Coal - - -	„	200	once
Food and Coal -	„ -	200	„
Bread and Tea -	„ -	100	twice
Childrens' Dinners	„ -	250	3 times
		1,200	

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. We have no suggestions to make.

FOLKESTONE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (KENT).

Population (1891), 23,905. Rateable Value (1892-93), £150,000.

Letter from *S. Penfold*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THE only exceptional distress existing in this town is owing to the severe weather, which has now lasted for more than a month, causing all those engaged in the building trade to be thrown out of work.

2. This distress is met by a society called the Folkestone Charity Organization, by relief from the clergy of the various parishes, private charity, and this morning the Corporation placed about 200 men at work to clear the streets of snow that had been left.

3. We have no register.

4. We are in hopes that now milder weather is approaching work will be in full progress again and the temporary distress removed.

I might remark that my Corporation have made application to your Board for permission to borrow money for the erection of a School for Science and Art. All the formalities have been complied with, and if we can get immediate sanction for this we can at once employ a number of men in letting the foundations be got on with.

GODMANCHESTER MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (HUNTINGDON).

Population (1891), 2,095. Rateable Value (1892-93), £14,531.

Letter from *J. T. Tysoe*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THE distress in this borough is slightly exceptional, and entirely due to the prolonged frost.

2. For several weeks past the Municipal Authority has employed five extra men in cleaning out drains and watercourses which are under the Authority, at a cost of about 10*l*. Further, there being a balance of about 16*l*. of a fund collected by public subscription four years ago, when the distress was more widely spread than at the present time, I called a meeting on February 8th to consider the question of finding relief work for the unemployed, and the conclusion arrived at was, that very few men were then unemployed, and that the meeting be adjourned until such time as the Mayor thought proper to call it together again, which was done on the 16th February, and, finding that the number of men unemployed had increased, it was resolved to give work to all applicants belonging to the borough on the following Monday morning, in cleaning out a watercourse which is not under the Municipal Authority ; only two or three men offered themselves on Monday, but to-day as many as 10 are at work at the rate of wages paid for agricultural labour in the district.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. In rural districts no better work can be done than cleansing parish drains and watercourses.

GRAVESEND MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (KENT).

Population (1891), 23,876. Rateable Value (1892-93), £103,507.

Letter from *C. E. Hatten*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE is exceptional distress in the district, but it is due only to the severe weather. Immediately after the recent snowfalls the Council engaged large bodies of men to clear the streets, expending in so doing a sum of about 300*l*. In the week ended Saturday the 16th February the number of men so employed was 579, including carters. They were at work on six days only.

A Special Relief Fund was inaugurated on Wednesday in last week, and to it a sum of over 200*l.* up to the present time has been voluntarily contributed. The number of persons relieved once last week by coals, bread, groceries, and soup out of this Fund was 495. There are two soup kitchens in the town which also relieved other necessitous persons. These are in addition to the usual trivial voluntary agencies at work.

No unemployed register is maintained.

The Council have no suggestions to make, save those which are embodied in the course adopted by them.

HEDON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (YORK, EAST RIDING).

Population (1891), 979. Rateable Value (1892–93), £3,328.

Letter from *R. A. Park*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THE severe weather has been felt by the poorer class of the inhabitants and a good many workmen, bricklayers and others, have been thrown out of employment.

2. A collection has been made amongst the inhabitants in the town, and distributions of soup have been made.

3. We have no such unemployed register in the borough.

HENLEY-ON-THAMES MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (OXFORD).

Population (1891), 5,288. Rateable Value (1892–93), £19,162.

Letter from *J. Wales*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

THERE is exceptional distress in this borough arising both from circumstances peculiar to this locality, and to the severe weather.

To meet the distress a soup kitchen has been opened since the commencement of the severe weather, and by this source an average daily number of 150 families have, during the week ended the 16th inst., been relieved. The Town Council have taken into their serious consideration the absolute desirability of relieving the distress and giving work to the unemployed, and with this object in view they have kept a register of all men out of employment, and they have set on 20 men each day to do various scavenging work, such as scavenging roads, cleaning out courts and yards, and relieving the gutters from ice; these the Council consider are the best means that can be adopted for the relieving of such distress, where there are no other public works in progress.

HEYWOOD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 23,185. Rateable Value (1892–93), £94,894.

Letter from *A. B. Pilling*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is a limited amount of distress in this district arising from the severity of the weather.

2. The distress in question is being dealt with by a voluntary agency established by many of the principal inhabitants of the town and district, who are furnishing all the relief which is required. The scheme, however, has not yet been sufficiently long in operation to enable me to give any figures as to the average daily number relieved by the agency.

3. An unemployed register has not been found necessary, and is not maintained.

4. The Corporation consider that everything necessary is being done, and they have no further suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving the distress, which is very likely to be short-lived.

HYDE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 30,670. Rateable Value (1892-93), £108,320.

Letter from *J. Oldham*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the district, caused by the severe weather.

2. A relief fund has been commenced, and the first distribution of relief was made yesterday.

3. No register of unemployed is kept.

4. It is considered that the course which has been taken here to establish a voluntary relief fund is the best way of dealing with what is, no doubt, only a temporary distress.

HYTHE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (KENT).

Population (1891), 4,347. Rateable Value (1892-93), £20,225.

Letter from *G. Wilks*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. The ordinary winter distress is being met by the voluntary agencies, such as district visitors, soup kitchen, &c.

3. There is no unemployed register, and as a general rule we have no unemployed.

KENDAL MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (WESTMORLAND).

Population (1891), 14,430. Rateable Value (1892-93), £59,123.

Letter from *Luke Talbot*, Chief Constable, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress, largely due to the severe weather, although there is a scarcity of work for out-door labourers. There is also an unusual depression in the woollen industry, which is the staple trade of this district.

2. The Guardians are giving relief to able-bodied married men at test labour. The number so relieved during the week ending 16th February 1895, was 85 daily. The Kendal Corporation gave work to 26 of the unemployed daily during the same period, in the removal of snow from the streets. In addition to this, the Charity Organization Society relieved distressed persons to the number of about 200 daily by the distribution of coal and soup. The St. George's parish church authorities also gave similar relief to about 250 persons every day.

3. No unemployed register is maintained here.

4. No suggestions to make.

LONGTON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 34,327. Rateable Value (1892-93), £93,870.

Letter from *G. E. Farmer*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress amongst miners owing to several collieries in the district having been closed, and a degree of distress amongst potters, who have only been able to work half time owing to slackness for some time. The distress in these cases has been considerably accentuated by the late severe weather. Bricklayers, labourers, and most of the working classes engaged in out-door work have more or less been affected by the severe weather.

2. Nothing has been done at present by the public authorities to meet the distress, but there are several voluntary agencies at work in the town, and a considerable number of persons have been relieved each week by the distribution of bread, soup, meat, coal, and other things.

3. No unemployed register is kept in the borough.

4. I consider the Guardians of the Poor might do considerably more to relieve the distress in these exceptional circumstances but for the fact that in cases in which relief is given the recipient is deprived of his rights as a voter, and there are many most deserving cases who would sooner suffer want and distress than be deprived of their rights, even for a limited period. In addition to the relief before mentioned, there are several agencies for the distribution of clothing to the children in the district, and for the provision of free breakfasts to the children attending the elementary schools.

MACCLESFIELD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 36,009. Rateable Value (1892-93), £99,015.

Letter from *T. Pickford*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the town, caused by (*a*) the depressed state of the staple industry, "Silk Manufacturing," now much handicapped by imported silks; and (*b*) the addition of numbers of out-door labourers through the frost.

2. At my invitation the public have responded liberally by voluntary subscriptions to relieve the distress, by means of which 500 families or about 2,000 persons were relieved during the week ended Saturday, the 16th February; 300 families were also relieved on Monday, the 18th instant, the same number yesterday, and 200 to-day. There is also a permanent voluntary relief association in existence, from which 396 persons were also relieved in the same week ended 16th February.

3. No register of the unemployed is kept.

4. I shall be pleased to distribute any contribution with which the Government can aid, but can only suggest that unless remedial legislation is devised to foster the silk industry, the local distress will become chronic.

MAIDSTONE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (KENT).

Population (1891), 32,145. Rateable Value (1892-93), £145,125.

Letter from *H. Monckton*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this borough due to the severe weather.

2. The Urban District Council have employed about 50 hands in a quarry, about 100 in laying out a public recreation ground, and from 200 to 300 in clearing the streets and footpaths, and some few in the construction of fresh sewers.

3. There is no register maintained, but a list is kept of men employed, preference being given to married men with families.

4. There is no better way of dealing with the matter than above modes, coupled with the daily opening of the soup kitchen, which supplies about 1,000 quarts daily to those unable to work, and the private benefactions of grocery and coal. Power to borrow money for distress works would be a great help to the public authorities.

MANSFIELD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (NOTTINGHAM).

Population (1891), 15,925. Rateable Value (1892–93), £52,361.

Letter from *J. H. White*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the borough, and this, so far as can be ascertained, is not due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, but to the severe weather.

2. Little has been done to meet the distress by public authorities. The Town Council has reduced the price of coke for small quantities. A number of public works are on hand, including works of water supply, the contract for which amounts to over 21,000*l*., of sewerage, and of street improvement, but the frost has been so severe that it has occasioned almost total cessation of work. I am not aware that the Board of Guardians have taken any exceptional steps. Very much has been done by voluntary agencies. Some weeks ago a soup kitchen was started, and ten days ago a public meeting was convened by the Mayor, at which a relief fund was opened. To the soup kitchen fund 77*l*. has been contributed, and to the Mayor's fund over 187*l*., a total of 264*l*. In addition, subscriptions of 27*l*. per week have been promised as long as the frost continues. The relief given consists of soup and bread, groceries, and coal and coke. During the week ended Saturday the 16th February the total average daily number relieved was 400 men, and, including their wives and families, probably 1,600 individuals.

3. No register of unemployed is kept, as it is believed the lack of employment is only temporary.

4. The Mayor has no suggestions to make.

MARLBOROUGH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (WILTS).

Population (1891), 3,012. Rateable Value (1892–93), £11,309.

Letter from *W. Duck*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. I DO not know that there is any exceptional distress in the borough. There are a number of men out of work at the present moment, but this may, I think, be chiefly attributed to the severe weather, and as soon as the frost breaks up the larger proportion of them will find employment.

2. In

2. In addition to the ordinary channels for the alleviation of such distress as may exist, there has recently been, by means of private benevolence, a general distribution of coal. There is also a soup kitchen, supported by annual voluntary subscription, with two distribution days every week.

3. No unemployed register is maintained. In a small place like this the necessity for one has never been felt.

4. Voluntary agencies have proved quite sufficient to meet any existing distress, but if the severe weather were to continue for any further great length of time, it may become necessary to adopt some means for finding employment for those who, while willing to work, are prevented from following their ordinary avocations.

NEWARK MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (NOTTINGHAM).

Population (1891), 14,457. Rateable Value (1892-93), £61,545.

Letter from *G. Tallents*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THOUGH there is distress from want of employment consequent on the severe frost, it is not exceptionally bad. Voluntary agencies for relief are at work, and are sufficient to meet the requirements of the case.

PENZANCE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 12,432. Rateable Value (1892-93), £47,436.

Letter from *W. H. Julyan*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THE distress existing in this borough is due to the severity of the weather, which has put a stop to building operations and out-door employment generally. The frost has, however, broken up and masons are again at work.

2. The public authorities have given employment to a number of labourers in making temporary repairs to the sea-wall damaged in the gale on the 10th inst. I also convened a meeting, at whose instance a fund was raised and over 50 tons of coal distributed; there is also a soup kitchen established at which 150 persons were supplied with soup and 180 loaves distributed. The Charity Organization Society further gave 360 breakfasts to poor children during the week.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

PETERBOROUGH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SOKE OF PETERBOROUGH).

Population (1891), 25,171. Rateable Value (1892-93), £105,865.

Letter from *W. Mellows*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. I BELIEVE there is not any exceptional distress in the district beyond what is attributable to the severe weather.

3. We do not keep an unemployed register.

POOLE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DORSET).

Population (1891), 15,438. Rateable Value (1892-93), £49,268.

Letter from *C. J. Woodford*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is very great distress in the borough, which is entirely due to the severe weather, as the building and kindred trades to building are the staple industries—also the fishing industry.

2. A relief fund, quite voluntary, was organised by myself in calling a sheriff's meeting, to which the people of Poole have most liberally responded. The borough authorities have also employed many of the men so affected to clear the streets and thoroughfares of the town; and on Friday next I have called a special meeting of the Streets and Highways Committee to try and find some work in making or, I may say, in re-making a road to the Fever Hospital, which has been damaged by the floods.

3. A register is made daily by a committee who sit at the Guildhall every evening at seven, myself presiding, at which we hear cases and grant tickets of relief for food and coals. We have an average of 100 applicants, and in addition to these, we supply from a soup kitchen 600 quarts of soup and 400 1lb. loaves.

4. I have no suggestions to make.

Rawtenstall Municipal Borough (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 29,507. Rateable Value (1892–93), £106,494.

Letter from *R. Worswick*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this borough owing to a large number of quarrymen and men engaged in the various building trades being at present absolutely without work in consequence of the severe weather, and also owing to a large number of people who work in the various mills only being employed part of their time in consequence of bad trade.

2. To meet the distress three soup kitchens have been established in the borough, which have been supported by voluntary contributions, and at which soup and bread are daily distributed. The average number of persons that have been relieved each day at each soup kitchen during the week ended Saturday, the 16th instant, was about 300.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

4. Some system ought, if possible, to be devised whereby the respectable and deserving poor could be better ascertained, for in this district those applying for relief are chiefly of the common lodging-house class and similar persons, and it is feared that the respectable and deserving people who somehow cannot bring themselves to openly apply for relief, even though in great need, suffer very keenly in such times as the present; and I am informed that persons of the vagrant class are better off in times of distress than at other times, for they generally manage by some means or other to obtain all they require from the various soup kitchens, and can therefore pursue their indolent habits to a much greater degree. I am afraid, therefore, that much of the relief is given to undeserving persons because of the difficulty there is in getting at the deserving poor.

St. Albans Municipal Borough (Hertford).

Population (1891), 12,898. Rateable Value (1892–93), £38,268.

Letter from *A. H. Debenham*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. Except for the recent and still continuing severe weather, which has caused a cessation of building and other out-door work, there is no exceptional distress in this city; in fact, no respectable able-bodied man willing to work need, under normal circumstances, be out of employment in this city.

2.—(*a.*) I should say that distress owing to the frost did not begin to be severely felt by any considerable number of persons until it had lasted a fortnight—*i.e.*, about the 9th instant.

(*b.*) Coal has been distributed by voluntary agencies during the whole winter.

(*c.*) At the latter part of last week about 150 persons daily received relief from voluntary agencies.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make. The authorities are looking forward to the recommendations of the Select Committee. I may add that the Council have just started relief works, which will employ 50 to 60 men for seven hours a day, at 4*d.* per hour; but it is proper to state that such works will probably cost the Council at least double what they could have been carried out for by the same men in normal weather.

Shrewsbury Municipal Borough (Salop).

Population (1891), 26,967. Rateable Value (1892-93), £128,500.

Letter from *W. G. Cross*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. There is a great deal of exceptional distress in this borough owing to lack of employment, caused chiefly by the severity of the weather, but also to a large extent in consequence of the badness of trade.

2. The Mayor has raised, by public subscription, a fund to relieve the temporary necessities of the poor. In order to reach every case of distress which prevails, the borough has been divided into eight districts, and a committee, consisting of the clergy and ministers of the various denominations, together with such other persons as they have selected, has been appointed to distribute the relief. This has been regularly done for the past ten days and will be continued till the men are at work again, if the fund holds out. With the view of alleviating the distress employment has also been given by the Town Council to an average of 103 extra men daily for 10 days in clearing the streets and thoroughfares of snow, 200 men being the largest number thus specially employed on any one day.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. An application has been already made to the Local Government Board by this Town Council for sanction to purchase a piece of land, and to borrow the sum of 1,550*l.* to defray the cost thereof, and to lay the same out as a public recreation ground. If immediate permission could be granted a number of unemployed men might be set to work without delay, and I respectfully suggest that this matter should at once engage your attention, as there is not the slightest fear of any local opposition to the scheme referred to.

SOUTH MOLTON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DEVON).

Population (1891), 3,126. Rateable Value (1892-93), £13,297.

Letter from *A. E. Shapland*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this borough, in fact no distress at all.

2. The Corporation is giving employment to about 40 men who were out of work, principally owing to the severe weather, mostly masons and labourers. But, however, owing to the weather I have given out coal-tickets once and sometimes twice a week, and the soup kitchen is giving out soup three times a week, and other private individuals are liberally helping in various ways. In fact, the wage class in this borough and the paupers are always well looked after.

3. No unemployed register required.

4. No suggestions are necessary.

SUTTON COLDFIELD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (WARWICK).

Population (1891), 8,685. Rateable Value (1892-93), £55,576.

Letter from *T. V. Holbeche*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE has been a considerable amount of distress in the borough, gardeners, bricklayers, and others being out of employment owing to the frost.

2. The distress has been met by the distribution of soup, bread, groceries, and coal, the cost being defrayed by voluntary subscription.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

TENBY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (PEMBROKE).

Population (1891), 4,542. Rateable Value (1892-93), £21,655.

Letter from *C. W. R. Stokes*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the borough other than what has arisen through the severe weather.

2. The Town Council have formed themselves into a Committee and collected funds to meet the cases of distress that have arisen through the severe weather, and a Committee meet daily to distribute the fund that has been collected; besides this, the Corporation have put on a number of men to repair the sea-wall, which has been very much damaged by the late gales, and also put on any men that want work at stone-breaking. On the average we have relieved about 30 families each day for the week ending the 16th instant.

3. No unemployed register is kept here.

4. No suggestions to make, only the Council would be obliged if the Local Government Board would more expeditiously attend to applications for loans for works of public improvements.

TIVERTON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DEVON).

Population (1891), 10,892. Rateable Value (1892-93), £47,141.

Letter from *C. M. Hole*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE has no doubt been some exceptional distress in Tiverton in consequence of the long continuance of frost and severe weather.

2. Soup and bread have been given away or sold at a very small price by voluntary agencies. In the week ended Saturday, 16th instant, 760 quarts of soup and 1,800 quartern loaves of bread were distributed.

3. No unemployed register is kept and none is required.

4. I suggest assisted emigration.

Totnes Municipal Borough (Devon).

Population (1891), 4,016. Rateable Value (1892–93) £14,880.

Letter from *A. Michelmore*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. There are at present in this borough a larger number of men out of employment than usual at this time of the year, consequent upon the extreme severity of the weather.

2. The Municipal Authority has provided relief work in raising and breaking stone for roads, and other necessary work, the average number receiving employment to Saturday last being thirty.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The abolition of the short service system in the Army, additional inducements for joining the Navy, and other means which would tend to relieve the present depression, which apparently is daily increasing.

Tunbridge Wells Municipal Borough (Kent).

Population (1891), 27,895. Rateable Value (1892–93), £207,417.

Letter from *Sir D. Salomons*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. The distress is due to the weather. Men have been out of work for a month or more; women (widows) have also suffered. I regret to say that improvidence has, in many cases, had much to do with the results, for wages are very high.

2. After three weeks of bad weather the authorities have started relief works, but advantage is not taken of the move as largely as might be, said to be caused by the action of trade unionism. A great deal of private help has been given. When the frost breaks up the distress will, in a great measure, be gone. The fear inspired by the new Death Duties tends to keep money unspent. It is my own case, along with most friends of mine. There is the feeling of "What is to come next?" and this acts badly upon the working population.

3. At one time an unemployed register was kept at the Town Hall; but, if it still exists, I cannot say as I am writing. If it does, no advantage appears to have been taken of it.

4. Being a large employer of labour, and on intimate terms with the working population, there is a remedy I can suggest, and have always fought for it, with only limited success—to keep down the poor rate, and to test true poverty. The Poor Law is hardly dealt out; more leniently, perhaps, with us than in many places; yet very hard. The working man or woman must be at the workhouse door before assistance is given. If when a frost or bad times (exceptional) has lasted (say) a fortnight, then reasonable assistance should be given, a committee deciding the sum in each case. Thus families would be kept together in their homes, with goods intact. Some arrangement might exist for repaying the sums advanced. People, when at work, should subscribe 3*d.* or 6*d.* a-week, against bad times, to the parish, and thus insure themselves. Such people do not object to act thus towards Friendly Societies. The law must be so altered as to allow parish help in these cases without losing civil rights, as at present. Having indicated a method, I will not trouble you with details.

Wallingford Municipal Borough (Berks).

Population (1891), 2,989. Rateable Value (1892–93), £9,687.

Letter from *S. Payne*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. I do not consider that there is exceptional distress in this borough. What there has been is owing to all out-door work being stopped by the severe weather.

2. On the 1st February I issued an appeal for funds for poor relief, and 78*l.* has been subscribed. This sum has been distributed in tickets for coal or provisions, from 2*s.* to 5*s.* in value, in 279 cases. The first issue of tickets was on the 2nd instant; in all the most needy cases a second ticket was given; and in many a third also, the total number being 522. The number issued in the week ended 16th instant was 140. I know of no other relief except distribution of soup on a small scale.

3. No unemployed register is kept here.

4. Up to the present date our well-to-do people have always subscribed to relief funds in very severe weather, but I am of opinion that such relief would be more properly given through the Poor Law.

WAREHAM MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DORSET).

Population (1891), 2,141. Rateable Value (1892–93), £5,077.

Letter from *J. A. Drew*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, due to the severity of the weather. The workers at the pottery, cement, and clay works, and all who labour out-of-doors, having been out of employment for several weeks.

2. Private individuals have given coals and food through the parochial agencies. A small amount of work has been afforded by the public authorities in clearing away the ice, and I issued a circular appealing for help, of which a copy is enclosed. My committee are distributing soup and bread on alternate days to all who need relief, and in addition tickets for grocery and coals to the most urgent cases.

3. A sub-committee has collected, by house-to-house visiting, a complete list of the unemployed, for the purpose of apportioning relief.

4. For the immediate relief of distress, I do not know what to suggest better than the plan that has been adopted here, with power to grant a certain amount from the rates proportionate to the amount collected voluntarily; for the future, greater education and encouragement of thrift in Board and National Schools; a scheme of compulsory insurance against distress and old age.

(Circular above referred to).

MAYOR'S RELIEF FUND.

Dear _____ Wareham, 12 February 1895.

THE severe weather that has recently prevailed having caused considerable distress and sickness to be felt in our town, many being thrown out of employ, it was resolved at a representative meeting held at the Town Hall on Monday, 11th February, that subscriptions should be invited for the purpose of establishing soup kitchens and taking any other steps for the immediate relief of the poor that may be thought desirable by the committee. Your contribution to this fund will be gladly received by

Yours faithfully,
J. A. Drew, Mayor.

WEDNESBURY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 25,347. Rateable Value (1892–93), £84,879.

Letter from *J. Knowles*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THE exceptional distress now prevalent in the Borough of Wednesbury is due to the severe weather and the general slackness of trade in the locality.

2. The clergy and ministers and other influential private residents are busily engaged in distributing relief in their own way; and, as the result of a public appeal made on Saturday last, I have received the sum of 22*l*., which I have sent to the clergy and ministers to augment their resources. I am unable to give any information as to the number relieved.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

WELLS MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 4,822. Rateable Value (1892–93), £15,710.

Letter from *J. H. Holloway*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the city, due only to the severity of the weather.

2. The Urban Sanitary Authority are carrying out improvement works in order to give employment where possible, and a relief fund is open for the distribution of coal and soup. Tickets for 2,500 gallons of soup, and 45 tons of coal were issued by me "during the week ended 16th February," but I am unable to supply "the average daily number relieved."

3. No unemployed register is kept, the cause being only temporary.

Weymouth Municipal Borough (Dorset).

Population (1891), 13,866. Rateable Value, £70,212.

Letter from *Sir Richard Nicholas Howard*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

The exceptional distress in this district is entirely due to the severe weather, and not to any circumstances peculiar to the locality.

The Mayor immediately took steps to meet the distress by authorising our Inspector to take on any men out of employ at 2*s.* 6*d.* per day, and engage them in cleaning up the streets and doing any work he could find them to do; the daily average was about 50. He also opened soup kitchens, and distributed bread and coals, and we think the distress has been fairly grappled.

No unemployed register has been maintained, as we did not consider the number of men out of employ warranted it.

We are not like towns with a large labouring population. They are mostly engaged in discharging vessels, and labour connected with the port, and whose employment is not so dependent on exceptional circumstances as in inland towns or large seaports.

Wisbech Municipal Borough (Isle of Ely).

Population (1891), 9,395. Rateable Value (1892–93), £38,260.

Letter from *A. W. May*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

There is a large amount of distress in this town, but not, I believe, like what unfortunately exists in large centres. The cause of such distress is the prolonged frost, which alike suspends all agricultural work and closes our river to shipping. Of what is being done privately I cannot speak authoritatively, but it is not inconsiderable. Publicly we supply bread every day, coals once a week, and soup twice, this not from the rates, but from a public appeal.

Further, we offer employment in the form of breaking granite for Corporation purposes, whilst discretion is given to the Surveyor to draft off *bonâ fide* applicants, unable to perform such labour, to lighter work.

No register has so far been maintained.

The only suggestion I should care to make is, that action should always be taken early, before the need is so acute, and homes dismantled.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Abergele and Pensarn Urban District (Denbigh).

Population (1891), 1,981. Assessable Value (1892–93), £6,072.

Letter from *W. F. Thomas*, Deputy Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. Exceptional distress does no doubt exist at present in the district, as a large number of bread-winners have been thrown out of work by the prolonged and severe frost. Under ordinary circumstances and in fine weather there is always ample employment for the labourers of the district, and cases of real poverty are few and far between.

2. The District Council has taken no steps to meet the distress, but a great deal has been done by voluntary subscription, and large quantities of soup, bread, coal, and tea have been, and are still being, given away daily. It is a difficult matter, when so many different people are giving, to make an estimate of the number of persons relieved, but, having inquired of all the donors, I calculate it to be about 150 daily.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. Nothing can be done until the frost breaks, when the labourers and artizans will be able to resume their employment.

ALLERTON URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 914. Assessable Value (1892–93), £14,479.

Letter from *C. Spencely*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the above Urban District; all the labouring people are kept in their ordinary employment.

ALTON URBAN DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 4,671. Assessable Value (1892–93), £14,623.

Letter from *W. Trimmer*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is a considerable amount of distress at present from want of employment amongst the labouring classes, arising:—(1.) Through the severe weather, which has brought work in agricultural districts to a standstill, and has exhausted the savings of the labourers. (2.) Through the inability of tenant farmers to pay the wages of their usual labourers. (3.) Through want of employment in the town.

2. A soup kitchen has been opened, at which from 120 to 150 are daily supplied with soup at less than half-cost. A coal and fuel distribution at less than half-cost is made once a week; upwards of 200 applicants are usually supplied at each distribution. The Council has given temporary employment to some 30 labourers to cleanse the bed of the River Wey, and has resolved to commence additional sewerage works as soon as sanction can be obtained to a loan for the purpose.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. No suggestions to make.

ALTRINCHAM URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 12,440. Assessable Value (1892–93), £55,898.

Letter from *George Bowen*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is a considerable amount of distress in this district. It is of a temporary character, and arises entirely through the long-continued frost throwing out of employment outdoor workers, such as bricklayers, joiners, plasterers, &c., and many workers on the soil.

2. The distress is being met by opening soup kitchens, and other forms of relief, through the agency of a provident society, which has been in operation for 15 years, and is thoroughly acquainted with the needs of the district, and who have undertaken a systematic distribution of relief, aided by voluntary subscriptions, which have been largely increased under the circumstances. The average number of persons, children and adults, relieved, for the six days ended the 16th instant, with soup and bread, was 1,763. On two mornings of the week free breakfasts were provided for an aggregate of 672 children.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained here; the necessity has not arisen.

4. The inclemency of the weather has rendered it very difficult for the local authority to find work for the unemployed, but I believe the temporary needs of the district are being, and will be satisfactorily met, and I am informed that there has not been any increase in the number of persons applying for relief through the Guardians.

AMBLESIDE URBAN DISTRICT (WESTMORLAND).

Population (1891), 2,360. Assessable Value (1892–93), £13,642.

Letter from *H. Redmayne*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

THERE are no urgent cases of distress in the district, and what little distress there is, is amply covered by local charities.

Ashford Urban District (Kent).

Population (1891), 10,728. Assessable Value (1892–93), £41,676.

Letter from *W. G. Handcock*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. There is very little distress in our town.

2. A benevolent society; a soup kitchen; Urban Authority endeavour to find employment for any deserving case.

3. There is no unemployed register kept, which I think is a great pity.

4. I would suggest that a labour bureau be established in all towns, as in nearly every case where real distress exists it is in the family of the drunken poaching loafer, who will not work, and exhibits no feeling for his poor children.

Aspatria Urban District (Cumberland).

Population (1891), 2,714. Assessable Value (1892–93), £7,311.

Letter from *F. Richardson*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in our district, but a fair number of men are out of work (particularly quarrymen).

2. The Urban District Council have found a certain amount of employment in clearing away snow. A voluntary subscription was made on the 9th instant, over 60*l.* being collected, and over 50 families were helped on this day in sums varying from 5*s.* to 10*s.* each; also eight hundredweight of coal was given to these recipients on 13th instant, and they were again helped by similar amounts to those first named on the 16th instant. About half the money collected is in hand.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

Baildon Urban District (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 5,785. Assessable Value (1892–93), £16,361.

Letter from *T. M. Holmes*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. There are not many cases of exceptional distress in this district, although the severe weather has caused many to be without employment.

2. A voluntary committee has been formed for distributing relief to deserving and needy cases; last week from 50 to 60 families were supplied with tickets for procuring groceries, meat, or coal, value from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* Every case can be readily investigated, as most of the people's circumstances are known to one or other member of the relief committee.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. The committee will be able to deal with the distress in the district for two more weeks. Considerable work has been found by the Urban Council's predecessors for unemployed artisans.

BALA URBAN DISTRICT (MERIONETH).

Population (1891), 1,622. Assessable Value (1892–93), £3,758.

Letter from *D. Jones*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

THERE is great distress in this district, owing to the severity of the weather, most of the sufferers being masons, their labourers, and general labourers and their respective families.

Soup kitchens have been established about three weeks ago by voluntary agencies, by which about 140 are relieved three times a week.

The Council has no new works on hand, and therefore cannot employ more labourers than are already engaged.

BARKISLAND URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 1,835. Assessable Value (1892-93), £5,798.

Letter from *J. W. Longbottom*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district; the majority of the inhabitants being small farmers who have money, however small an amount, laid by for a rainy day.

2. It has not been found necessary to institute relief works.

3. An unemployed register is not kept.

4. There are no suggestions to be offered.

BARNOLDSWICK URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 4,131. Assessable Value (1892-93), £6,909.

Letter from *Charles Thornton*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the Barnoldswick District. Consequently the four questions are not answered.

BARTON-UPON-HUMBER URBAN DISTRICT (PARTS OF LINDSEY).

Population (1891), 5,226. Assessable Value (1892-93), £14,700.

Letter from *H. R. Dix*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

IN this district, with a population of some 5,200 (or about 960 resident Parliamentary electors), the chief source of employment for the labouring classes, leaving out agriculture and market gardens, are the brickyards all along the river front, a large cement works, a chemical manure works, a ropery, shipping, and some chalk quarries. Of these, the ropery and chemical works have not stopped working; the cement works, after working intermittently through the past summer, has stopped for the last eight weeks; the boatmen have been frozen up and the brickyards and quarries have worked when the weather permitted. There has been a considerable amount of distress among the cement works men and others, and on the 8th instant a committee was formed to relieve it. On Saturday, the 9th instant, they relieved 60 men with flour and groceries to the value of 13*l.* 8*s.* 6*d.*, and on the 16th they gave away 15*l.* 19*s.* 6*d.* in coals, flour, and groceries, to 75 persons, and they will continue the relief every Saturday until the distress has abated. In addition to this the overseers have a small charity at their disposal, which they spend and distribute annually in coals. This winter they have given 64 tons among 280 people, including widows and other poor people, but it is not restricted to those out of work and in distress. A sports committee has given away some 11*l.* in flour and bread as follows:—February 9th, flour to 127 persons; 14th, 160 loaves to 120 persons; 19th, 190 loaves to 125 persons; 21st, 100 to be distributed.

There has also been a good deal of private charity, lots of people getting coals, meat, flour, bread, and groceries. Altogether, the exceptional cases have all been met, and there is no acute distress such as the local committee cannot meet.

There is no unemployed register maintained and no need of keeping one.

In addition to the above there are charities which give away every year 25 good suits, 40 good dresses and flannel petticoats, and about 12 good overcoats.

Battle Urban District (East Sussex).

Population (1891), 3,153. Assessable Value (1892–93), £8,071.

Letter from *W. A. Raper*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. Up to the present moment there has been no exceptional distress in this Urban District. There are the usual cases of men temporarily thrown out of work on account of the severe weather.

2. This is met partly by the trustees of the local charities, and partly by voluntary agencies.

3. There has hitherto been no need to keep an unemployed register.

4. Farmers in this district have done their best to meet the times by resorting to fruit growing, market gardening, dairy farming, and poultry rearing. Practically, none are able to show a profit, while the large majority have been powerless to stop the steady disappearance of their capital, while the landlords are suffering equally with their tenants. The labourer, up to this point, has not felt the pinch; but unless some means are speedily devised for the relief of agriculture, so that the land can be made to return the cost of cultivating, with some slight interest on capital employed, we are rapidly approaching a point when the agricultural labourer will be thrown out of work: and, with the disappearance of rateable value, it will be impossible for the local authorities to employ them. It follows that all other members of the rural community will suffer with them.

Blaydon Urban District (Durham).

Population (1891), 13,371. Assessable Value (1892-93), £32,761.

Letter from *Henry Dalton*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in this district, although there are a number of people kept out of employment by the severity of the weather.

2. Nothing has as yet been done by public authorities to meet any distress that may have arisen from this cause, but voluntary action is, I understand, about to be taken. No relief has been given.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. I have no suggestions to make, but will lay your letter before the Council at the earliest opportunity.

Bowdon Urban District (Chester).

Population (1891), 2,792. Assessable Value (1892-93), £24,913.

Letter from *H. W. Evason*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. There is, no doubt, a little distress in the district among day gardeners, brick setters, painters, &c., whose work is for the time partially or wholly suspended by the frost.

2. It is believed, however, that all such cases are known to the district visitors and other voluntary workers in connection with the religious bodies, and are suitably met. There is also a "Provident Society" in Altrincham, supported by voluntary subscriptions from Altrincham and Bowdon, available for the needy of both places. In the answer of the Altrincham Council you will get the figures for the week ended Saturday last.

3. No such register is needed in Bowdon.

4. No suggestions to make.

Bromborough Urban District (Chester).

Population (1891), 1,662. Assessable Value (1892–93), £9,360.

Letter from *W. A. Weston*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. As there is no distress no steps are necessary.

3. No register of the unemployed is requisite.

4. The Chairman of the Council has no remarks to make further than the foregoing.

Budleigh Salterton Urban District (Devon).

Population (1891), 1,770. Assessable Value (1892–93), £7,742.

Letter from *W. Theobald*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional or local distress beyond such as results from the late unseasonable weather.

2. The Urban District Council here has yesterday voted a certain sum to be expended by their Surveyor in work for the unemployed. Private relief by means of soup tickets at the coffee tavern is also given.

3. The place is too small to call for an unemployed register.

4. No suggestions to make beyond the above statements.

Castleford Urban District (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 14,143. Assessable Value (1892–93), £28,287.

Letter from *H. H. Broadbent*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. The distress here is serious and exceptional, and in some degree special. Our staple industries are mining, glass bottle making, and earthenware making. Some of our glass bottle works are closed; the pits are working short time on account of bad trade, and the long-continued frost has also thrown out of employment all out-door workers.

2. The Urban District Council has at this moment no opening for labour, but have applied to the Local Government Board for its sanction to borrow for the purpose of laying out public park of some 17 acres, and we are anxiously waiting their reply.

There are no other public bodies here capable of finding employment. A large and representative committee has been formed and, by subscriptions and donations of coin and kind, is doing a good work, but is sadly crippled for want of funds, and the source of present supply is very precarious, nor can it long stand the present strain upon it, and the outlook is very serious; the breaking up of the frost would relieve some, but by far the greatest number of cases arise from other causes, bad trade and consequent loss of orders. The total number relieved for the week ended 16th February by the relief committee is 785; adults 2*s.* each, children 6*d.* each per week.

3. No register is kept, there being no work and no inquiries for workmen.

4. As regards the present distress, we can suggest nothing beyond the immediate sanction of the Local Government Board as to loans, and the removal or slackening of the red tape that make these applications a matter of delay.

As to the question broadly, the more general application of the Allotments Act, and the alteration of existing laws that permit wealthy landowners to acquire, keep locked up, and refusing to sell land, whereby the natural expansion of industrial centres is crippled, and the channels of employment are curtailed. The law of entail has some of this to answer for, but there are those who are not content with their inherited estates, but who continually are adding field to field, and we are informed that in this district the greatest difficulty is experienced in obtaining land for building purposes at almost any price.

Cheadle and Gatley Urban District (Chester).

Population (1891), 8,252. Assessable Value (1892–93), £38,055.

Letter from *T. H. Duckworth*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. There is not any additional distress in this district but such as may be attributed to the severe weather.

2. The additional distress is being relieved by voluntary agencies. Many persons are engaged in carrying water as the water mains are frozen.

3. No register of unemployed persons is kept.

4. No suggestions to make. If the arctic weather will take its departure employment will speedily reach its normal condition.

CHESHAM URBAN DISTRICT (BUCKINGHAM).

Population (1891), 8,018. Assessable Value (1892–93), £16,787.

Letter from *Edwin Reynolds*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

THERE is considerable distress as the result of the severe weather, whereby many men have been thrown out of work.

The Council resolved at their meeting on Wednesday, 13th February, to find employment by widening a main road, and are now employing about 100 men in carrying this out.

CHILDWALL URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 199. Assessable Value (1892–93), £2,296.

Letter from *C. Spencely*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district; all the labouring people are kept in their ordinary employment.

CHURCH URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 5,870. Assessable Value (1892–93), £20,622.

Letter from *Smith Barnes*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is an exceptional distress in Church and district, owing chiefly to the severe weather.

2. The matter has been taken up by the Council, who are subscribing throughout the district. We did not keep a record of the quantity relieved last week.

3. There is no register maintained of the quantity unemployed.

4. The only suggestion I have to make is a rather serious one, and that is that some of the cotton machinery is gradually ceasing to run owing to bad trade, and unless this improves I am afraid the distress will be more acute and no doubt a great many will have to rely on the Guardians of the Poor for help.

COCKERMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT (CUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 5,464. Assessable Value (1892–93), £14,540.

Letter from *J. Straughton*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. EXCEPTIONAL distress does exist caused by the severe weather.

2. Urban District Council dealing with the distress by providing work (snow removing, cleaning, and repairing roads and streets). Voluntary agencies dealing with the distress by opening soup kitchens, distributing coal and coke, and providing free dinners for the children.

3. No register is kept of the unemployed.

4. Plenty of work is waiting to be done if the frost would leave us.

COCKINGTON URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 1,718. Assessable Value (1892-93), £——.

Letter from *T. C. Lindop*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is a slight and temporary exceptional distress in this district due to the recent severe weather, which has put a stop to building operations.

2. The Council are carrying out the suggestions in your circular of the 11th instant by providing work on local improvements, and for the week ended 16th instant the average number relieved in such manner is 5·75 per diem, which has since been increased to 10.

3. An unemployed register is maintained, but there were only 13 applications.

4. The Council cannot make any further suggestions.

COLEFORD URBAN DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 2,450. Assessable Value (1892-93), £4,713.

Letter from *S. J. Thomas*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

THERE is a considerable amount of distress just now in this district, owing to want of trade at the collieries and stoppage of work at the quarries in consequence of the severe frost.

A public subscription has been raised; 52 families were relieved on Friday last by tickets of the value of 1*s.* each for a man, and 1*s.* for wife, and 6*d.* for each child; soup has been given by private charity twice in each week.

No register is kept of the unemployed. The only remedy for relieving the distress I can suggest is to repair and make roads. The Government hold about 11,000 acres of wood here and need roads. If the Woods and Forests Department would order this to be done at once, no doubt it would relieve the present distress.

COLNE URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 16,774. Assessable Value (1892-93), £52,544.

Letter from *A. Earley*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THE distress, which is, happily, not so acute here as in many districts, is wholly due to the severe frost, and affects principally out-door workers.

2. The local authority have found employment on the highways for as large a number as possible. A relief committee has been formed, to whom private subscriptions have been readily given for distribution amongst the needy cases. The trades council have also organised a relief committee. These efforts, it is believed, have been so far successful.

3. No register has been kept.

4. The district at present, fortunately, provides employment for nearly all classes, and as soon as the frost passes away the distress will practically cease.

COMPTON GIFFORD URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 3,264. Assessable Value (1892-93), £19,671.

Letter from *E. A. Bennett*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE is not any exceptional distress in the district.

Crediton Urban District (Devon).

Population (1891), 4,207. Assessable Value (1892–93), £11,337.

Letter from *W. B. Berry*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in this district except that due to the frost; men employed in the building trade, masons, labourers, tanners, and jobbing men, who work on the roads and land, perhaps about 80 men, are unemployed.

2. A subscription list has been opened, and from 80*l.* to 100*l.* subscribed, which has been distributed by a committee where needed. Men have been employed in clearing the water-tables of ice.

3. An unemployed register has not been maintained.

4. I can offer no practical suggestion beyond the course that has been adopted for relief of distress at present.

Cuckfield Urban District (East Sussex).

Population (1891), 1,737. Assessable Value (1892–93), £7,233.

Letter from *T. A. Maberly*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. Such exceptional distress as prevails in this district is purely due to the long continuance of frost, which has thrown a considerable number of persons, especially in the building trades, out of work; but as most of these people, even if they have no savings of their own, are well enough known to the local tradesmen to obtain credit, the number in actual distress is very small.

2. Some six or eight small tradesmen and artisans have formed themselves into a committee, and raised some 20*l.* by subscription for the relief of distress in this district and the neighbouring rural parish of Cuckfield. Last week they distributed tickets for food, and in a few cases which had received no coal from the permanent coal club maintained here, fuel to the value of 12*l.*, among 48 families. A daily average could not be struck, as there was only one distribution of tickets during the week; and, indeed, this is the only one the committee has made since its formation. That the recipients were in lack of comforts I have no doubt, but I think it highly improbable that many, if indeed any, would have had to apply to the poor law but for this distribution; *e.g.*, two were cottagers of my own, whom, of course, I should not have allowed to become destitute merely from a temporary cause.

3. No unemployed register is maintained, as the frost is the sole cause of such lack of work as exists.

4. None but a thaw.

Dawlish Urban District (Devon).

Population (1891), 4,210. Assessable Value (1892–93), £18,224.

Letter from *J. S. Whidborne*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. The Council do not consider there is any exceptional distress in the district, although probably a few men may be temporarily out of work owing to the severe weather.

2. For the week ended 16th February there were three deliveries of soup from the public soup kitchen on alternate days, and also some bread distributed. The daily number relieved is believed to be about 200.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The Council have no suggestion to make as to the relief of distress, the number of operatives being only small in proportion to the population.

Denton Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 13,993. Assessable Value (1892–93), £42,399.

Letter from *C. Richards*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

Up to the present time it has not come to the knowledge of the Council that there is any great amount of distress in their district, but in regard to this I may observe that the Chairman has appointed Monday next to meet representatives of the trades council on the subject.

Diss Urban District (Norfolk).

Population (1891), 3,763. Assessable Value (1892-93), £8,057.

Letter from *H. O. Lyus*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in the district beyond that which is due to the severe weather.

2. To meet the distress so occasioned a committee of townsmen has been formed to raise funds by voluntary subscriptions to relieve cases of distress brought to the notice of the committee and found to be deserving.

3. No unemployed register is kept or required.

4. No suggestion is made.

Dukinfield Urban District (Chester).

Population (1891), 17,408. Assessable Value (1892-93), £50,227.

Letter from *A. Bassil*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. We have no exceptional distress in this district other than the result of the severe weather.

2. No systematic effort to provide relief has been initiated, though some little assistance has been rendered in the way of teas to poor children, &c.

3. No register has been kept of the unemployed.

4. No suggestions to make, as the necessity for active effort has not arisen in this district.

East Dereham Urban District (Norfolk).

Population (1891), 5,524. Assessable Value (1892-93), £19,767.

Letter from *W. T. Gidney*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in the district, a little want of employment being due only to the severe weather.

2. Voluntary efforts have so far met the case by a certain number of men employed on a skating area. Breakfasts and dinners supplied by voluntary aid; coals provided by voluntary subscriptions, distributed every week, and aid by local societies have hitherto met the case.

3. No register is maintained or required.

4. No suggestions to make. The partial break-up of the severe weather will, I hope, result in the normal state being regained.

Fareham Urban District (Southampton).

Population (1891), 7,934. Assessable Value (1892-93), £23,491.

Letter from *J. Sandy*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. There is a great amount of distress in this district, principally caused by the present very severe weather, otherwise the men out of employ have not been so great as in former winters.

2. The District Council have arranged for the making up of certain roads (hitherto private) and the constructing of footpaths by the side of main roads, to provide work for those out of employ at 3*s.* per day. But, owing to weather, it is impossible to go on with the work. To relieve distress occasioned thereby, I consulted the Vicar, and we called a meeting and started a distress fund, and have raised the sum of 100*l.* and upwards, and this has been expended during the past fortnight, at the rate of 40*l.* per week, in coals, soup, and bread. The number of those relieved during the week ended 16th February was 214 wage-earners, but other chronic cases were relieved out of the said 40*l.*

3. No unemployed register is kept; but we have a very representative committee to administer relief.

4. (A.) When a local authority has decided upon providing work for the unemployed (after careful inquiry as to the need), and such work should be of the nature of footpaths by the side of, or any improvement to, the main road, or the construction of a new road or approach to any of the county buildings that

may be situated within the district of the said authority, a more hearty co-operation should be given by the county council, which may be done by the council appointing a committee with executive power, as under the Local Government Act, 1894 (Alterations of Boundaries), and Local Government Act, 1888. Such committee could hold an inquiry in the district, and if satisfied that a *primâ facie* case has been made out, and that such work is of a nature to improve the road or approach, and that it will be a benefit to the ratepayers generally, the said committee would then determine the proportion of cost to be contributed by the County Council. And, if the terms agreed upon should meet with the approval of the local authority, the work could be proceeded with at once, and find almost immediate work for the unemployed. Under present arrangements months are wasted ; the case for the local authority has to be submitted by, and through, officials (possibly unsympathetic) ; and various meetings have to be held by both authorities before the amount is determined upon ; the work, depending generally upon the amount contributed, is not started. A change of the kind suggested would lead to much more work being found for the unemployed, and would be cheaper and prompter than the present method. (B.) I would also suggest that the number of years allowed by the Local Government Board for the repayment of money borrowed for permanent works, such as the reclaiming of marsh land, the improvement of sheets of water or ponds by filling up or otherwise, so as to make them into ornamental waters or pleasure grounds, should be extended ; and that the local authorities should not have to furnish a complete plan when making application to borrow, but should be allowed to do such work by sections, and borrow money as required ; and that they be allowed to proceed with such work without waiting for the usual inquiry to be held, the work done being taken into consideration by the inspector on making his inquiry. This would facilitate the providing of work for the unemployed. Under present arrangements it frequently takes months to complete the details before work can be commenced. In the meantime the men would either find work or starve ; and by the time everything was completed it would be found that the relief works were not then required.

FARNWORTH URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 23,758. Assessable Value (1892–93), £60,730.

Letter from *David Crossley*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THE exceptional distress in this district is due, to a very large extent, to the severe weather.

2. A public subscription has been opened, and now amounts to over 300*l*. Dinners are given daily to children, and necessitous cases are dealt with on their merits, over 250 families receiving relief last week. In addition to above, large quantities of coal have been distributed.

3. We have not an unemployed register, the majority having work to go to as soon as the weather will permit.

4. I think we are coping with the distress satisfactorily.

FEATHERSTONE URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 7,528. Assessable Value (1892–93), £23,703.

Letter from *A. Wardman*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

So far as I can ascertain there is no exceptional distress ; and the working men in our district never were in a more prosperous condition, if they would only keep from drink.

FELIXSTOWE AND WALTON URBAN DISTRICT (EAST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 3,507. Assessable Value (1892-93), £21,325.

Letter from *F. B. Jennings*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. OWING to the state of the weather, there has been temporary exceptional distress in the district, but not from any other cause.

2. The Urban District Council has, with a view to meet such temporary distress, employed men in moving drift snow and such other work as it was possible to have done.

3. No unemployed register has been opened, the distress being looked upon as purely temporary.

4. The partial thaw having commenced, the works of laying mains and other drainage works, and laying water mains are commenced, which will for some weeks give employment to all in the district and to a large number from the neighbouring places.

FELLING URBAN DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 17,490. Assessable Value (1892-93), £40,282.

Letter from *G. Bolam*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, owing partly to the chemical works having been closed, the owners having asked for a reduction of wages. This dispute is now settled, but owing to the severe weather, the works are not in full working order. There is also distress owing to the quarries in the district not working.

2. A fund has been established in the district, of which the Chairman of the Council is Chairman, and I am honorary secretary, and for the week ended 16th February over 600 families have been relieved.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. The committee at present in existence is fairly meeting the requirements of the district in relieving the distress.

FESTINIOG URBAN DISTRICT (MERIONETH).

Population (1891), 11,073. Assessable Value (1892-93), £52,769.

Letter from *H. P. Maybury*, Surveyor, 20th February 1895.

1. EXCEPTIONAL distress does exist, but is entirely due to the severe weather.

2. A committee has been appointed under the auspices of the Urban District Council to receive subscriptions and distribute relief, and in addition the quarry proprietors have advanced to their workmen (who are out of employment owing to the weather), in the shape of a loan sums ranging from 1*l.* to 3*l.* per month. The Graigddu Company on the 9th instant advanced in this way, to about 400 men for the month, 2*l.* to each single man and 3*l.* to each married man. The managing director of another quarry writes that he purposes doing likewise; and this morning a cheque for 1,600*l.* has been sent by the directors of the Oakeley Quarries to be distributed between their *employés* on the 23rd instant. For your information I may state that the men at both the Oakeley and Llechwedd Quarries (some 2,000 in number), received a full month's wage on the 9th instant. The total number of persons relieved by the "relief fund" up to the 16th February, was 315, or at the rate of 79 per day.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make. The moment the weather changes and men are able to get back to their employment the distress existing now will disappear.

FILEY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, EAST RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,481. Assessable Value (1892-93), £8,529.

Letter from *J. G. Gofton*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

WE have had little or no distress in Filey, and what exceptional cases there have been, have been owing to the weather stopping various works for a few days. These cases have been relieved by private contributions, and this council, being about to undertake a new sewerage scheme, all persons in the town and district will be afforded opportunities, in the same manner as the erection of the sea wall and promenade provided work for the unemployed the two preceding winters.

GAINSBOROUGH URBAN DISTRICT (PARTS OF LINDSEY).

Population (1891), 14,372. Assessable Value (1892-93), £41,794.

Letter from *G. Housham*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

So far as this town is concerned, there is no great exceptional distress in the district; of course there are a few cases, principally amongst the bricklayers, and these have been relieved from private sources, but the great works of Messrs. Marshall Sons & Co., where the whole of the mechanics and artizans are employed, have been in full work and overtime during the winter; and I am pleased to say that I do not think it is necessary for any extraordinary works for the few unemployed there are at present, and now the frost is going the bricklayers are at work.

GREAT HARWOOD URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 9,073. Assessable Value (1892–93), £23,954.

Letter from *J. Noble*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the district among out-door workers caused by the long frost and severe weather. There is also some distress among the cotton factory workers by the temporary stoppage of some mills in the district, but there is no distress peculiar to the district so far as I know.

2. This Council is employing a number of the outdoor workers in the removal of ashes and other refuse from the district. The Council is also prepared to employ a large number more in street excavations and sewering, as soon as the weather is at all favourable. Others are being relieved by voluntary subscriptions given in relief tickets upon shopkeepers, &c., but I have no means of ascertaining the average number daily, as relief is being given from various sources.

3. There is no unemployed register kept in the district.

4. I have no suggestion to make on the matter at present.

HAMPTON WICK URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 2,378. Assessable Value (1892–93), £13,541.

Letter from *D. Robinson*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is not any large amount of distress. Few of the inhabitants belong to trades seriously affected by the weather. A certain number of jobbing gardeners, &c., are out of work in consequence of the frost, but most of them have found employment on the ice in Hampton Court and Bushey Parks, with the cessation of the ice, their ordinary work will be open.

2. What distress there is, has been relieved by voluntary agencies, but the actual number relieved last week cannot be given.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. No further steps for the relief of distress appear at present to be called for in this locality.

HAVERHILL URBAN DISTRICT (WEST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 4,560. Assessable Value (1892–93), £9,231.

Letter from *W. B. Gurteen*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is (at present time) more distress than usual, chiefly through the severe weather, and lack of agricultural employment.

2. Relief by Guardians of the Poor; a voluntary distress fund; and private charity; 153 persons have been relieved by the voluntary distress fund, week ended Saturday, 16th instant; the Urban District Council have employed a considerable amount of extra labour in keeping thoroughfares clean and clear from snow.

3. No unemployed register.

4. The cessation of the frost will help us considerably, as it has been stopping one or two public works which the Urban District Council have in contemplation.

HAYDOCK URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 6,535. Assessable Value (1892–93), £16,317.

Letter from *F. D. G. Drayton*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. PRACTICALLY speaking, the whole population in this district are employed by one firm, Messrs. Richard Evans & Co., Limited, colliery proprietors, and, inasmuch as work is fairly plentiful, there is no peculiar distress in our district.

2. My answer to No. 1 Question will show that there is no necessity for any public authority to interfere in the work of relief.

3. No register is kept for the same reason.

4. Under the peculiar circumstances of this township, you can understand the Local Authority do not need to take upon themselves the question of relieving distress, inasmuch as such is almost unknown.

HEBDEN BRIDGE URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 6,365. Assessable Value (1892-93), £22,346.

Letter from *R. Crabtree*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district of this Council, except in the case of workmen who are engaged in the building trade, which is very limited in this district; the staple trade of the district is carried on in workshops and warehouses, which upon the whole has been fairly good.

Under the circumstances, the public authorities have not deemed it necessary to establish any special agency in the district, but this Council has, during the severe weather, employed a larger number than usual of out-door workers to clear snow from the streets.

No register of the unemployed is kept in this district. With respect to voluntary agencies, I am directed to state that two or three local butchers have combined, and for the past two weeks have daily given out bread and soup to any applying for same, and that the number of such applications during the week ended Saturday, the 16th instant, was 200, principally from the outlying districts, and tramps; and that not more than 15 families within the district of this Council have applied for relief during the past fortnight.

HEXHAM URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 5,932. Assessable Value (1892-93), £20,182.

Letter from *W. Pruddah*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE are many men in this district out of employment at the present time, principally owing to the severity of the weather. No register of the unemployed is kept; but the men out of employment are chiefly those who work out-of-doors, such as masons, masons' labourers, gardeners, and general labourers. There are very few manufactories in this district, and the *employés* have not been seriously affected. This Council have given the matter of providing for the unemployed work which will not involve the stigma of pauperism their attention; and during the past five weeks a large quantity of whinstone has been procured, a suitable yard taken, and employment in breaking this stone offered to the unemployed at 2*s.* 9*d.* per yard. For the week ended the 16th instant 34 men were thus employed, and it has been ascertained that after the first few days those who are at all desirous of working readily undertake this stone-breaking. Voluntary agencies are also at work in the district relieving the distress. The Hexham soup kitchen distributed, during the week ended the 16th instant, 2,247 quarts of soup; and free breakfasts are provided daily to about 135 children by the committee of the Hexham Sunday School Union.

HOLBEACH URBAN DISTRICT (PARTS of HOLLAND).

Population (1891), 4,771. Assessable Value (1892-93), £15,668.

Letter from *T. A. Lane*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

THERE has been no abnormal or exceptiona distress in this parish, due either to want of employment or severity of the weather. This is a purely agricultural district, and the farmers have been able to keep their labourers in fairly constant work. The Council instructed their Surveyor to employ such men as were not in regular work to remove the snow from the streets and roads, and for any other labour which could be done.

Of course, there were exceptional cases of hardship and privation, but these were fairly well provided for by private benevolence in the form of a daily distribution of soup, coals, bread, &c. There is also a small fund at the disposal of the Vicar and churchwardens for providing the necessitous with provisions and groceries, so that upon the whole, I think, we may congratulate ourselves upon having tided over this winter with no more distress than is incidental to all winters. I may add that the Council are always anxious to find work for those men who, by force of circumstances, are at any time deprived of their employment.

HORNSEY URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 44,205. Assessable Value (1892-93), £319,988.

Letter from *F. D. Askey*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the Hornsey Urban District. At the same time a large number of additional men have been employed during the last three or four weeks by the District Council in the removal of snow from the public roads and in other works.

HOYLAKE AND WEST KIRBY URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 6,545. Assessable Value (1892–93), £32,251.

Letter from *R. Williams*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. WITHOUT doubt there is exceptional distress in this district at the present time. In great measure this is due to the long-continued severe weather, which has practically put a stop to building operations, and largely interfered with other work. The distress has been peculiarly great in Hoylake, owing to the disaster to the fishing boats during the recent storm.

2. The District Council have done their best to relieve the distress by commencing work in connection with certain street improvements. The preliminary work of excavating and removing sand was found to be quite practicable during the frosty weather, and could be carried out by men not usually engaged in such occupations. The District Council are anxiously waiting for your honourable Board's sanctions for loans for these particular street works, as the funds of the Council are naturally low at the end of the financial year, and will soon be exhausted. As to these sanctions I would refer you to my letters of the 12th and 19th instant, and your letters of the 9th and 19th ultimo. About 100 men were employed on the street works by the District Council during the week ending the 16th instant; the average daily number being 85, and the amount of wages paid in the week being 85*l*. In addition, about 40 cases are known to have been relieved by voluntary agencies, but the information under this head is very imperfect, as may be gathered from the next answer. For a small district like this the numbers given are, no doubt, large, but no money has been wasted.

3. No register is kept.

4. The only suggestion I am to make is that the District Council should at once be placed in a position to borrow the money necessary to carry on the works referred to in the letters quoted above.

HURST URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 6,772. Assessable Value (1892–93), £17,484.

Letter from *J. Whitworth*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is distress in this district consequent on the stoppage of a large mill in the district, which employs upwards of 500 persons. There is also distress amongst the out-workers, but there are not many of this class in the district.

2. The Council have formed themselves into a relief committee to receive donations, and several of the persons out of employment are collecting subscriptions under the supervision of the Council. For the past three weeks a distribution in money has taken place at the mill every Saturday morning to those out of employment through this stoppage. Over 180*l*. has been distributed.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions other than what is being done as above.

KENILWORTH URBAN DISTRICT (WARWICK).

Population (1891), 4,173. Assessable Value, (1892–93), £15,034.

Letter from *J. J. W. Wilmshurst*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THE only distress in this district has been occasioned by the weather. Such distress has been relieved as much as possible by local subscription, and the Council have, where practicable, found employment for the "unemployed."

KETTERING URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 19,454. Assessable Value (1892–93), £36,209.

Letter from *H. Lamb*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. AT the present time there does not appear to be any exceptional distress in Kettering, except that which is caused by the severe weather.

2. *See* enclosed cutting from "The Citizen" (a local paper) of yesterday's date.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained. The secretary of the Trades Council informs me that, in his opinion, such a register is unnecessary, because as soon as the frost disappears nearly the whole of the unemployed will resume work.

4. The Chairman has no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving the present distress, which is only temporary.

(Extract

(Extract from "The Citizen," 19th February, before referred to.)

"Kettering Relief Committee.

"Practical evidence of the utility of the Kettering General Relief Committee could not be better gained than by a peep into the Salvation Army barracks during one of the free meals provided for hungry children, and not less hungry adults, whom the extraordinary severity of the weather during the past few weeks has rendered unable to supply themselves with the bodily necessities of life. At the Salvation Army barracks two meals a day are provided for children, breakfast and tea. Substantial fare is provided, and the best evidence of appreciation of these meals is the fact that at them there is a regular attendance of about 200. At noon a dinner is provided for the unemployed, both male and female, and the attendance at these dinners has been usually about 60. The fare consists of wholesome soup (or coffee, if desired), and bread, which the diners may partake of *ad lib.* On Saturday a warehouse collection was made in Kettering to alleviate the distress caused by the protracted frost among the out-door workers, when between 70*l.* and 80*l.* was collected. The money was distributed in the evening, when 120 married men, representing 570 persons, and 44 single men, received relief. This was supplemented by five tons of coal from the General Relief Committee, and a quantity of provisions from the Working Men's Club for men who had families dependent upon them. The Band Relief Committee have decided to continue their work, and the bands have consented to parade the town on Saturday next."

Kirkby Lonsdale Urban District (Westmorland).

Population (1891), 1,802. Assessable Value (1892–93), £6,393.

Letter from *F. Punchard*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

There is little or no exceptional distress in this district.

Masons (banker hands or stone dressers) and sundry workmen of the contracting building trade are, as usual, thrown temporarily out of employment by the severity of the frost, but the wages earned by them when at work, and the credit they have secured with their shopkeepers, have enabled them, so far, to avoid asking for any special or exceptional assistance or relief. For the ordinary staffs of mechanics and artizans (wallers, carpenters, painters, and such like) employed on the local landed estates, the landowners have mostly provided some indoor work, whilst their labourers have found employment in the neighbouring woods and plantations. For other labourers who have been prevented following their ordinary employment, provision has been made by the owners of Underley Estate, who, upon the commencement of the frost, started the construction of a new street in the town which had for some time been projected, but which, for various reasons, had not been previously put in hand. Here all the able-bodied labourers resident in the town who have made application for work have obtained it at a rate of wages but slightly below the ordinary one of the district. The labour of excavation is, of course, greatly increased by the frost, but the better facilities for carting, and the furnishing of employment, are looked upon as compensating advantages. It will be gathered from the above that any want of employment which exists arises solely from the severity of the weather, and is not sufficient to call for special action or relief works by any of the local authorities. I feel, however, that should any such necessity arise, and any improvement work be instituted, one great subject of discussion amongst the members of the Urban District Council would be, how far the cost of any such relief works or improvements could be borrowed upon temporary mortgage of the rates. It would probably be felt that the throwing of the whole cost upon the present body of ratepayers would be a hardship upon them, especially as the cost of the work done would undoubtedly be greater than if it were let by the ordinary process of tender and contracts.

Leek Urban District (Stafford).

Population (1891), 14,128. Assessable Value (1892–93), £38,929.

Letter from *J. Brealey*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. There has been and still is a certain amount of exceptional distress in this district, owing (*a*) to bad trade and want of employment among the people, principally young men and women, employed in the silk manufactures; (*b*) labourers and bricklayers not being able to work through the severe weather for six weeks.

2. (*a*) Subscription list was opened, and relief given to a great number, about 150 heads of families being relieved weekly, a soup and children's dinner fund also in addition. (*b*) The District Council have employed a good number of men in removing snow, and some extra men have been employed in surface drainage works, sewers, and road making, for which a loan has been granted by your Board; owing to the severe frost the work is costing more to execute than it would in ordinary weather.

3. No register of unemployed is kept; there will probably be sufficient work for out-door labour in the spring and summer months.

4. Cannot make a suggestion for relieving those who suffer principally from bad trade and short time at the silk factories, further than to point out that it is caused to a great extent by the free importation of foreign manufactured silk, produced under the system of long hours and cheap labour on the Continent, in Japan and elsewhere.

Leighton Buzzard Urban District (Bedford).

Population (1891), 6,704. Assessable Value (1892–93), £15,153.

Letter from *W. S. Page*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress, except what is due to the weather.
2. Public subscription and private charities; 60 men employed removing snow.
3. No unemployed register kept.
4. No suggestions to make.

LEPTON URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,855. Assessable Value (1892–93), £6,286.

Letter from *J. Sharp*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.

2. In order to avoid such a state of matters, the Council have found work for a number of men in breaking dross, chiefly for the repair of the main roads.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

LLANDRINDOD WELLS URBAN DISTRICT (RADNOR).

Population (1891), ———. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *D. C. Davies*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE is no serious distress in this district. Any that does exist is entirely due to the severe weather, and every necessitous case is being relieved by the Guardians or the charitably disposed. There is no agency of a voluntary kind established to furnish relief. There is no unemployed register maintained. Should there be any cases of necessity my Council are prepared to provide work for able-bodied men. There are not more than 10 persons in the parish in receipt of parochial relief.

LLANDUDNO URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (CARNARVON).

Population (1891), 7,348. Rateable Value (1892–93), £57,838.

Letter from *J. Jones*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

IN my opinion, and in the opinion of the Llandudno Urban District Council, there is exceptional distress in the district, due to the severe weather. I enclose a printed copy of the minutes of a meeting of the Council in committee held on the 8th instant, setting forth the steps taken by the Council with a view to alleviating existing distress. The average number employed during the week ended 16th February was 50. The number of employed at the present time is 69. No applications of a genuine character have, so far, been refused. Soup and bread have been given by voluntary agencies, and upwards of 300 persons have been daily relieved in this way.

(Minutes above referred to.)

Resolved,—That the committee is of opinion that there is a considerable amount of distress amongst the unemployed in the town, and they would recommend the Council, with a view to alleviating such distress, to put in hand some work of permanent improvement which they consider it will be necessary to carry out in the immediate future. That the Surveyor be empowered to employ up to 40 men at 2*s*. 6*d*. per day, and to set 24, more or less, of the men to clear away some of the ashes from the ashes tip adjoining the gas works, and to convey it to the clay pits of Messrs. P. and H. Lewis, and there tip it. That the Surveyor be authorised to employ some of the men on the mountain and other paths in repairing the paths and removing loose stones. That a number of carters be employed to cart a quantity of soil not exceeding in the whole 500 loads to the proposed promenade extension, at a price equivalent to not more than 7*s*. per day, or 1*s*. per load, and that the Surveyor be empowered to employ some of the unemployed men in filling up and levelling the site.

LOWER BEBINGTON URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 5,216. Assessable Value (1892–93), £21,418.

Letter from *W. Harper*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.

2. The ordinary charitable organisations appear to be quite adequate to satisfy the wants of the poor or temporarily unemployed.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. No suggestions to make.

LYNTON URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 1,547. Assessable Value (1892–93), £4,981.

Letter from *John Heywood*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. No distress, though want of work is unprecedented; this is through action mentioned below.

2. The Urban Council has issued handbills as enclosed, and put to work all the unemployed on preparation of stone for an extension of esplanade, this work involving a loan which has not yet received the sanction of the Local Government Board, but as it is only a continuation of work which before obtained sanction, and there is no opposition to it on behalf of ratepayers, the Council thought itself justified in commencing work, as it was the only work masons, who form a great number of the unemployed, could work at during this severe frost.

3. The Surveyor to the Urban District Council keeps a list of all applicants for employment, but work is at once found for all.

4. The suggestion I offer is that the application to borrow be sanctioned at once for the esplanade extension, and unusual efforts be made to this end, as the work contains elements not affected by this long frost.

(Handbill above referred to.)

SEVERE FROST.

Masons and others who are unemployed can obtain temporary work by applying to

W. Squire, Surveyor.

MARKET HARBOROUGH, GREAT AND LITTLE BOWDEN URBAN DISTRICT (LEICESTER).

Population (1891), 5,876. Assessable Value (1892–93), £22,344.

Letter from *E. H. Hopton*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district beyond what usually exists among men connected with the building trade at this season of the year. The distress would have been more acute had it not been for the unusual activity in this particular trade within the district.

2. All that is necessary is being carried out by voluntary agency. Soup is supplied at 1*d.* per quart. Children attending the National Schools (whose parents are out of work) are supplied with free breakfasts and dinners. Free gifts of coals are made where necessary.

3. An unemployed register is not kept.

4. Nothing more than has already been done appears necessary at present, but I consider it would be an advantage in urgent cases if the local authorities were empowered to grant small temporary loans, free of interest, to respectable working men out of employment during the winter months.

MATLOCK URBAN DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 5,285. Assessable Value (1892–93), £19,633.

Letter from *E. Slack*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. WE have no distress but what is occasioned by the weather, having a good many gritstone quarries in the neighbourhood, employing 300 to 400 men. Owing to the frost, this work is entirely suspended; there will be plenty of work as soon as change sets in.

2. The present distress is being relieved by a fund raised voluntarily, managed by a large representative committee supplying coals and provisions twice per week.

3. We have no unemployed register.

4. Have no further suggestions to offer.

MELTON MOWBRAY URBAN DISTRICT (LEICESTER).

Population (1891), 6,392. Assessable Value (1892-93), £22,409.

Letter from *J. J. Fast*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress within the district of my Council, and consequently no unemployed register is maintained.

MILNROW URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 8,046. Assessable Value (1892-93), £30,640.

Letter from *H. Blackburn*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district, except what is caused by the severe weather.

2. Work for the last two or three weeks has been found for over 40 men, taking the average daily for last week ended the 16th February, in clearing the roads and streets.

3. No special register is kept, not being particularly required; but the Chairmen of Roads Committee and Sanitary Committee are instructed to act with the Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector in the matter.

4. As soon as the Council have the sanction of the Board for borrowing powers for sewage works, &c., they will be in a position to find employment for any that may be in distress for want of employment.

MOLD URBAN DISTRICT (FLINT).

Population (1891), 4,457. Assessable Value (1892-93), £10,839.

Letter from *G. H. Bradley*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THE distress is largely owing to the weather. Certain lead miners (the mines are outside the district) are out of work through the weather. Colliers who live in but work outside the district are only partly employed, owing to the depression in their trade. This depression is felt in agriculture, lead and coal mining, the industries of the neighbourhood, and the town generally is undergoing a period of serious trade depression. This is felt amongst tradesmen, and throughout all sections of the population, and hardly is accountable for by the weather, the reasons being probably very much deeper.

2. The Council administers a relief fund, with the aid of a body of ladies and gentlemen, who make a systematic inspection of the districts into which the town has been divided for this purpose. Relief is given out of a fund provided voluntarily, by means of orders on tradesmen for such goods as in the opinion of the visitors will best aid the individual case. Bread is also given. Each day a dinner is provided for children by tickets sold to them by the teachers in the elementary schools, at a halfpenny each. This dinner was commenced on Thursday last, and the attendances up to Saturday were 600. This is being continued, and 200 dinners are provided each day at the Town Hall. In addition, there are several individuals acting independently of the Council, who distribute soup and bread.

3. No register of unemployed is kept under ordinary circumstances. There is work for those who desire it. The general opinion here seems to be that the middle classes are almost more to be pitied than others.

4. Every attempt should be made, and is made here, to prevent duplication of charity. Where everybody is giving, the professional beggar is in a far better position than really deserving cases, which we attempt to reach.

MOTTRAM-IN-LONGDENDALE URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 3,270. Assessable Value (1892-93), £7,400.

Letter from *N. Buckley*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the Mottram Urban District.

2. No steps have been taken by public authorities.

3. No register of unemployed is kept.

NAILSWORTH URBAN DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 2,993. Assessable Value (1892–93), £ ——.

Letter from *W. G. Clissold*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is very little exceptional distress in our urban district. Such as there is has been caused by the severe weather, and is chiefly among the aged poor and the improvident, whose work has been stopped by the frost, and who have made no provision for temporary loss of wages.

2. All these cases have been relieved by the supply of coals and bread. Some 50 cases are receiving attention.

3. A register of all cases is kept, and they are all being watched.

4. As there are very few cases in which the stoppage of work is more than temporary, the committee have not thought it necessary to start any relief works, and think that the plan they have adopted is satisfying all present need.

NEWHAVEN URBAN DISTRICT (EAST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 4,955. Assessable Value (1892–93), £12,918.

Letter from *E. Knightley*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE is not much exceptional distress, and what there is, is owing to the prolonged frost.

A soup kitchen was opened early in January by voluntary effort, and continues to give out two issues each week.

No unemployed register is kept, and what distress there is now will disappear with the frost.

NEW MALDEN URBAN DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 3,437. Assessable Value (1892–23), £18,427.

Letter from *F. S. Merryweather*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THE somewhat exceptional distress in this district is entirely owing to the long continuance of severe weather.

2. As yet the distress has not been such as to call for any action on the part of the District Council. The various local benevolent funds have been augmented by special subscriptions, and thus the most pressing cases have been relieved. From coal charities, of which I am a trustee, 180 sacks of coal were distributed in January in New Malden, and the more pressing cases have been met by the benevolent.

3. An unemployed register has not been kept.

NEWTON ABBOT URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 8,521. Assessable Value (1892–93), £27,681.

Letter from *L. Bearne*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THE exceptional distress in this town has been caused by the severe weather.

2. The soup kitchen has distributed 140 quarts of soup, the same number of 2 lb. loaves of bread, and 11 dinners of meat, pudding, and vegetables daily during the week ended 16th February last. Ten tons of coal were distributed, in lots of 1 cwt. each, by me during the same week; other gifts of coal, bread, and tea have been made by other residents of the town.

3. A register of the unemployed was opened by the Surveyor of the Council about 10 days ago, but at a meeting of the Council on Monday last there were only 12 names on it; the Surveyor had engaged a few extra men about the work of the Council without waiting for the meeting of the Council, and they approved of this, and resolved that he be authorised to spend 50*l*., in addition to what had been done, in giving work to more unemployed men.

NORMANBY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 9,109. Assessable Value (1892–93), £20,008.

Letter from *S. Spry*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THIS matter was under the consideration of the Council at their last meeting, and it was stated by the Chairman that the iron and steel works in the district had been working full time since Christmas, and that there was no exceptional distress in the district.

NORTHWICH URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 14,914. Assessable Value (1892–93), £44,192.

Letter from *J. Cowley*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THE exceptional distress in the district is mainly owing to the extreme severity of the weather, in consequence of which many have been debarred from following their ordinary employment; otherwise the actual cases of distress from want of employment are not very numerous.

2. I issued circulars asking for subscriptions, which were successful, and the members of the Council formed themselves into a relief committee. For the week ended the 16th February the committee distributed 1,500 tickets, value 1*s.* each, for the purchase of bread and groceries, or coal, and in addition to this, about 50 tons of coal were given away by private benefactors. A soup kitchen supported by another individual supplied 200 people daily. The committee also supplied the masters of the various elementary schools with tickets, value 2*d.* each, for distribution to the poor and deserving children of the schools.

3. No register of the unemployed is kept, but the Council temporarily increase their working staff on every opportunity.

4. With the departure of the severe weather the Council are pleased to state that they are sure the trade will assume its normal condition in this district, and that no large number of cases of distress through want of employment will be met with. The alkali works here are in full work, and the trustees of the River Weaver Navigation have expended 20*l.* a day in employment of additional labour to keep the river open for traffic.

NUNEATON AND CHILVERS COTON URBAN DISTRICT (WARWICK).

Population (1891), 15,297. Assessable Value (1892-93), £41,948.

Letter from *J. H. Bland*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. IT is believed that the distress in this district is entirely owing to the severe weather, and there is not any exceptional distress.

2. There is nothing being done by the public authorities, but there are at least 12 voluntary agencies at work, and it is considered they are doing everything that is possible and the circumstances of the case require.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. No suggestions to make. The men who are now out of employment are principally those engaged at the brick works and stone quarries, and also the bricklayers and their labourers. From inquiries I have made I am told that there is plenty of work for the men to do as soon as the weather breaks, and of course during the first part of the frost there was no stoppage of work at the brick works and quarries; under these circumstances you will see that the distress that is now prevailing in this district is attributable to the severe weather. You must not, however, understand that there is no distress here, as a number of men being out of work creates distress, but the voluntary agencies are rendering admirable assistance, and it has not been considered necessary to take up the matter by the public authorities.

ORMESBY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 8,633. Assessable Value (1892–93), £13,721.

Letter from *S. Spry*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THIS question had the consideration of the Council at their last meeting, and it was stated that the ironworks had been working full time, and that there were no exceptional distress in the district.

OTTERY ST. MARY URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 3,855. Assessable Value (1892–93), £8,401.

Letter from *Rev. G. M. L. Reade*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is a good deal of distress in the district; it is of an exceptional character, and it is mainly, if not entirely, due to the severe weather, and not to circumstances peculiar to the locality.

This district contains or comprises the mother parish of Ottery St. Mary and four daughter parishes, Alfrington (my own), Escot, West Hill, and Tipton. The distress is mainly confined to the mother parish, the town of Ottery, but not entirely. There are men out of work and poor people needing relief in the outlying parts of the district as well as in the town. Those out of work are chiefly masons, bricklayers, and their labourers, also some painters and carpenters; amongst agricultural labourers, while there are not so many out of work as amongst the masons, &c., there is distress owing to the severe cold.

2. On Thursday last, at our District Council meeting, I called the attention of the Council, as a matter of urgency and before the minutes were read, to the prevailing distress. We first made a voluntary collection among ourselves, and handed the amount over to the Soup Kitchen Committee.

Next, we considered the question of the unemployed. It was suggested that a road (leading from Ottery to West Hill) should be widened. The matter was referred to our Highways Committee. The committee met on the spot in question on Saturday morning, and, after consultation with the landlord of the adjoining property, Mr. W. R. Coleridge, decided that the work should be undertaken at once for the sake of the unemployed. We sent the town crier round the town and district on Saturday night, inviting unemployed to send in their names to the Surveyor. Before Sunday morning 44 men (and some lads also) had applied. We decided to take them on in batches for two or three days each batch. Accordingly, 22 men were taken on on Monday morning; three, however, did not come, as meantime they obtained work elsewhere. Some of my colleagues and myself met the Surveyor on Monday to see the work in progress. A second batch of men is to be taken on, probably to-morrow (Thursday). Some are engaged in quarrying the metal, others in the actual widening of the road. Considerable satisfaction, has, I believe, been expressed at the action we have taken, and while it is freely stated that there are men who are not sorry to subsist on charity, it is no less evident and freely stated that there are many who prefer to work if work can be obtained. We are to meet at the spot again on Thursday (to-morrow), and I will then write to you again with reference to what is being done in that particular matter.

3. The Surveyor is keeping a register of all applicants and of all who are employed. Any lads applying are paid reduced wages, and, where possible, half a day's work is given to anyone, man or boy.

4. As to charitable relief, I gave away a ton and over (22 cwt. in all) in this little parish last week, and I find that each of the people who received the cwt. has been very grateful for it. In the town of Ottery, *i.e.*, the mother parish, the Vicar called a meeting last Friday, which I (understanding that it was wished that some of the District Council should attend) with some of my colleagues attended; but, on arrival, it appeared that the ecclesiastical authorities of the town parish wished to ignore us, the District Council, and, in spite of my protest that it ought to be made a district matter, they decided to confine their efforts to the mother-parish alone. The fact is, that the District Council contains a majority of progressives, or liberals, and that I am a radical parson, and these facts are not congenial to the ordinary ecclesiastical mind, which is narrow and somewhat intolerant. Before the meeting separated, however, one of our Council was put upon the committee, and so I will ascertain from him or from others to-day and to-morrow exactly, so far as I can, what is being done, and will let you know again. Your present circular confirms me in the opinion I expressed at the meeting above mentioned, and still hold, viz., that the matter ought to be made a district affair, embracing the whole Urban District, and not confined to any ecclesiastically-divided portion of it. When the road-widening has been completed, should the frost continue and men still be unemployed, some of us consider that something further might be done in the way of giving work by quarrying a considerable amount of metal, gravel, &c., with a view to its future use. The chief difficulty as to all such works as these with us, and, I presume, with other District Councils, is the addition thereby made to the rates. For my own part—but here I, of course, speak only my own ideas—I hope the Unemployed Committee and the Local Government Board will see their way to make some sort of subvention from the National Exchequer in aid of the local authorities, who, in this time of need, have helped the unemployed by finding special work for them. I venture also to hope that steps will be taken, in accordance with Sir Theodore Fry's suggestion, to prevent any voter being turned off the Parliamentary Register because of having received exceptional relief at this most exceptional time.

OUNDLE URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 2,667. Assessable Value (1892–93), £11,312.

Letter from *F. W. Sanderson*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is very little exceptional distress in this district.

2. (*a*) The Urban District Council offer work (breaking stone for the roads) to any who may apply, at 1*s.* 6*d.* per ton, and three or four have applied. (*b*) By voluntary agency a soup kitchen has been organized to supply soup free to children, and at 1*d.* per quart to others. On the average 50 children come for soup, and 20 send to buy the soup.

3. No unemployed register is maintained; all cases are well known to the Council.

4. No suggestions to make.

PAIGNTON URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 6,783. Assessable Value (1892–93), £30,965.

Letter from *J. Parnell*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district. The distress existing is what has been usual at this time of the year.

2. The Council have given work to 30 extra men by means of handbreaking stones, and will give further employment in a few days by putting men on to drain the Pleasure Grounds, for which a loan was sometime since raised. All persons out of employment have been relieved by voluntary agencies.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. Answered by Question 2.

PRESCOT URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER.)

Population (1891), 6,745. Assessable Value (1892–93), £11,949.

Letter from *H. Cross*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, it being chiefly a mining and watchmaking one.

2. The Council are at present carrying on works of private street improvement, and are employing as far as possible those who are unemployed.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

PUDSEY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 13,444. Assessable Value (1892–93), £37,408.

Letter from *S. Myers*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district. There are a large number of strangers in the town who are connected with the sewerage works, and these, together with other outside workers, have been unable to work owing to the long-continued frost.

2. A Central Relief Committee has been form, and a public subscription list opened. Sufficient funds have been received to enable the committee to relieve all cases of real distress.

Soup and bread was distributed to 181 on 11th February; 202 on 13th February; 255 on 15th February —Total, 638. The committee also distributed about 40 tons of coke, 25*l.* worth of groceries, and 120 garments. In addition to these distributions by the Relief Committee, several other ladies and gentlemen have been giving relief.

3. No register is kept of the unemployed in this town.

4. The Central Relief Committee believe that they will be quite able to deal with all real cases of distress. As soon as the frost breaks, many of the men will be able to commence work again.

I may also state that a separate Relief Committee has been formed and a separate subscription list opened for Stanningley, which is partly within the Pudsey Urban District and partly within the Leeds Borough. The Committee have administered relief to all deserving cases in a similar manner as at Pudsey.

REDCAR URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,818. Assessable Value (1892–93), £9,175.

Letter from *A. H. Sill*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is not exceptional distress in the district.

2. Nothing either by public authority or voluntary agency.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

ROMFORD URBAN DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 8,733. Assessable Value (1892–93), £29,091.

Letter from *T. Bird*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district except that which has been caused through the late severe weather throwing out of employment a large number of people connected with agriculture and the building trade.

2. A public meeting has been held and a committee formed for the purpose of raising subscriptions for supplying food and other necessaries to the unemployed and their families, and since Christmas two soup kitchens have been in active operation supplying bread and soup two or three times a week.

3. No register has been kept, there being no apparent necessity for it.

4. No suggestions to make; what is being done appears to meet the requirements of the district.

ROWLEY REGIS URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 30,791. Assessable Value (1892–93), £75,928.

Letter from *N. Bassano*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is some distress, caused by the closing of the Corngreaves Works and the general depression in the staple trades of the district and aggravated by the severe weather, but a careful inspection of the district shows that there are not more than three per 1,000 of the whole population in exceptional distress.

2. In each division of the parish, soup, bread, coals, free dinners, &c., are being given by voluntary agencies, more freely than the necessities of the case really demand.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. Such distress as there is, is well in hand; with the break-up of the frost all will be well. There is of course the regular substratum of poverty due to the idle, improvident, drunken, badly made, unhealthy, vicious, the mistakes of humanity, but these are dealt with by the ordinary machinery, and will apparently be always with us.

SALTBURN-BY-THE-SEA URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,332. Assessable Value (1892–93), £10,037.

Letter from *S. Spry*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district, owing to the town being of a residential character.

SANDAL MAGNA URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 5,082. Assessable Value (1892–93), £11,312.

Letter from *H. Mason*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district, and such distress or poverty as does exist is being and can be satisfactorily dealt with by the usual methods.

It is not considered necessary to establish any register of unemployed persons or to make any suggestions with regard to the relief of distress.

SEAFORD URBAN DISTRICT (EAST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 2,425. Assessable Value (1892–93), £10,044.

Letter from *E. J. Gorringe*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in our district, due entirely to the severe weather.

2. A relief committee has been formed, and during last week (the first of our work) we relieved 67 cases.

3. There is no register of unemployed.

4. I have no suggestions to make, ours is a very small district, and there would be ample employment but for the frost.

SEDGLEY URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 14,961. Assessable Value (1892–93), £25,450.

Letter from *J. Smith*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. DISTRESS chiefly due to the long continued frost.

2. Committees have been appointed in the different places of the district, who are administering relief from the funds privately subscribed. Number relieved estimated at about 1,000 per week.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

SHANKLIN URBAN DISTRICT (ISLE OF WIGHT).

Population (1891), 3,352. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Marsh*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is in the district no great amount of exceptional distress, and what distress does exist is consequent chiefly on the long continued frost.

2. The Urban District Council have found employment for painters out of work; and have also engaged a number of unskilled labourers to crack stones. The number of men so employed is nearly 40. They also, in conjunction with voluntary clerical and lay helpers sit daily at the Council Chambers dispensing relief in kind to all in need from funds voluntarily subscribed. The average daily number relieved in kind, during the week ended the 16th instant, is 30. There is also, under the auspices of a local athletic club, a daily dispensation of hot soup and other viands at a nominal charge per head.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. Nothing beyond that wherever local circumstances will admit of the local authority engaging men to carry out local works capable of being done by unskilled or other labourers (without preliminary inquiry involving delay) such should be proceeded with at once.

SHELLEY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 1,599. Assessable Value (1892-93), £3,615.

Letter from *S. Fitton*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THE exceptional distress in this district is somewhat limited in extent and is caused mainly by the severity of the weather for the past six or seven weeks.

2. Public authorities have taken no action to meet the few cases of actual distress. Cases of actual distress are receiving help from relatives and private individuals.

3. No register of unemployed is kept.

4. I am hoping that any cases of exceptional distress will disappear on the breaking up of the storm.

SHOEBURYNESS URBAN DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 2,990. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *F. Gregson*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

IN the Chairman's opinion there is no widespread distress in this district. A few more people than usual are out of work owing to the recent severity of the weather; but these cases are effectually met by the Poor Law and by voluntary agencies, and there is as yet no necessity for exceptional measures by the public local authorities.

SLEAFORD URBAN DISTRICT (PARTS OF KESTEVEN).

Population (1891), 4,655. Assessable Value (1892-93), £16,365.

Letter from *E. Clements*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no distress of an exceptional character in the Sleaford Urban District, although there are many cases at present caused by the loss of employment through the severe weather, but are of a temporary character.

2. The Urban District Council have given employment to the unemployed, and the charitably disposed have dispensed coal, soup, &c., to alleviate the distress.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. The distress is purely of a temporary character in the Urban District, and the Council have no suggestion to make.

SOUTHBOROUGH URBAN DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 5,418. Assessable Value (1892-93), £22,316.

Letter from *P. Hanmer*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THE following men have been employed by this Council since the 30th January last in clearing snow from foot-paths and roads, breaking hard core for roads, cutting down and grubbing hedges, and levelling ground upon the site for new isolation hospital now in course of erection. The men are employed six hours per day at the rate of 4*d.* per hour.

January	30th,	14 men	9 hours each.
February	1st,	57 „	6 „ „
„	2nd,	79 „	6 „ „
„	5th,	81 „	3 „ „
„	6th,	90 „	7½ „ „
„	8th,	6 „	4 „ „
„	18th,	152 „	6 „ „
„	19th,	108 „	6 „ „
„	20th,	148 „	6 „ „

SOUTH DARLEY URBAN DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 754. Assessable Value (1892–93), £2,098.

Letter from *M. A. Sleigh*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE are some 14 to 20 unemployed in the district (men engaged in open quarry work) owing to the weather. Those engaged in lead mining and railway *employés* are still at work. The poorer and aged villagers are feeling acute distress through the same cause.

2. Voluntary relief in coals, groceries, &c. The Council are providing work on the highways, excavating and widening certain portion, for a limited number of the unemployed as choose to apply.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. To any sum provided or paid by local District Councils for public improvement, *e.g.*, widening or levelling roads, the County Council might be empowered to make grants promptly when such seasons as the present occur, when unemployed labour can be had cheaper, otherwise only very limited employment can be given.

SPALDING URBAN DISTRICT (PARTS OF HOLLAND).

Population (1891), 9,014. Assessable Value (1892–93), £22,549.

Letter from *S. Kingston*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1 THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, which is, I consider, owing mainly to the fact that this parish has, happily, a very small number of the class known as "idle loafers," compared to its population (over 9,000).

2. A relief committee has been formed, which provides temporary employment for all applicants who are married men with families, and the number so employed is under 35. Soup is also distributed twice a week to the deserving poor by the same committee. The funds for these relief works are provided by voluntary subscriptions, and no part of the cost falls upon the rates.

3. The relief committee keeps a register of the number of men so employed.

STAINLAND-WITH-OLD LINDLEY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 5,002. Assessable Value (1892–93), £14,211.

Letter from *A. T. Longbottom*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district, those families who are thrown out of work by reason of the severe weather having one or more children working at the mill, who support them.

2. The public authorities have not found it necessary to open any special relief fund.

3. An unemployed register is not kept.

4. There being no special distress to relieve, no suggestions can be offered.

STOURBRIDGE URBAN DISTRICT (WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 9,386. Assessable Value (1892–93), £27,123.

Letter from *W. Jones*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. EXCEPTIONAL distress, intensified by severe weather; always a certain amount of chronic distress, not due to locality.

2. The Urban District Council have no relief works. The Surveyor has engaged several hands for cleansing the roads of snow. The Guardians offer (through their Relieving Officer) task-work (to able-bodied applicants), breaking stones; remuneration, 9*d.* per day and one loaf of bread extra for each child. The total number relieved has increased from an average of 512 to 742 weekly (nearly 45 per cent. increase). The Voluntary Relief Committee distributed coal and bread on January 11th, 15th, 22nd, 29th; February 6th, 13th, and 20th, giving about 16 tons of coal and 600 (4 lb.) loaves at each distribution.

3. No register of unemployed kept.

4. The distress is an effect of some deep-rooted cause. The problem is, how to prevent the cause? The relief appears to increase or encourage pauperism. What is wanted is to devise some means of preventing it. There must be a remedy, and although I cannot name it, I trust your efforts may solve the problem.

STOURPORT URBAN DISTRICT (WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 3,504. Assessable Value (1892–93), £9,573.

Letter from *C. K. Harrison*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress except among boatmen and others thrown out of work by frost.

2. Subscriptions to a relief fund not organized by public authority. About 200 per day.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

STRETFORD URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 21,751. Assessable Value (1892–93), £113,536.

Letter from *F. Whitworth*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. Three soup-kitchens are in operation, but beyond this there is no systematic relief.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. This district adjoins the City of Manchester, and the working class portion of the inhabitants earn their livelihood in the city. So far as this district is itself concerned, there is no necessity for special measures of relief.

STROUD URBAN DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 9,818. Assessable Value (1892–93), £34,069.

Letter from *J. Chew*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no very exceptional distress beyond that occasioned by the severe weather. Owing to the nature of the trades carried on (tailoring, pin making, manufacturing, &c.) many of the female members of families have work.

2. On Thursday last relief works were started by this Council, giving three days' employment per week to about 60 men. A soup-kitchen, supported by voluntary contribution, has been started, and gave soup and bread daily, during the time specified by you, to an average of more than 220 applicants, representing over 1,100 persons. This work is still being continued. Coal tickets have also been freely distributed.

3. A register has been kept by this Council, and up to this date every applicant, resident in the district and having a family dependent on him, has been employed in accordance with Clause 2.

SUNBURY-ON-THAMES URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 4,099. Assessable Value (1892–93), £ ———.

Letter from *C. E. Goddard*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. No very exceptional distress. The increase of persons out of work is solely due to the severe weather.

2. Private charity and the Guardians of the district have successfully contended with the matter up to the present time.

3. Unemployed register not required.

4. No suggestion to make, present arrangements considered satisfactory.

Tarporley Urban District (Chester).

Population (1891), 2,702. Assessable Value (1892–93), £6,995.

Letter from *A. McCulloch*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. There is a little exceptional distress, due entirely to the severe weather.

2. Voluntary agencies are collecting subscriptions, and endeavouring to meet the distress. Nothing is being done by public authorities, except that the Urban District Council are employing their own men in breaking stones, clearing ice and snow from the roads, and supplying water from the mains. I am unable to state the average daily number of persons relieved by each agency during the week ended Saturday, the 16th instant.

3. A register of the unemployed is not maintained.

4. I have not any suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving the present distress. I believe the Guardians and the existing voluntary agencies are quite competent to deal with such distress as exists in this district.

Thame Urban District (Oxford).

Population (1891), 3,334. Assessable Value (1892–93), £9,087.

Letter from *W. Parker*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

The letter will be laid before the Council at their next meeting on the 27th instant. The Chairman, however, desires me to state that, in his opinion, there is not any exceptional distress in this district, the wants of the poor being to a great extent looked after by the district visitors of the various religious denominations, and by local charities, and it is believed that there has been no considerable increase in applicants for either out-door or in-door relief.

Tonbridge Urban District (Kent).

Population (1891), 10,117. Assessable Value (1892–93), £35,823.

Letter from *A. H. Neve*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. Considering the duration of the frost there does not appear to be any exceptional distress in this district. A large number of working men are unemployed, but, so far as can be seen, this is entirely owing to the weather. The distress existing (except so far as it is normal) is owing to the lack of work, and it is hoped that on an improvement in the weather this distress will rapidly abate.

2. The Poor Law Authorities are, of course, enabled to deal more directly with the matter, but this Council has taken on a large number of men for sweeping and clearing the streets. Several have been employed in pulling down some old buildings recently purchased for street improvements, and in cutting up the wood in fire-wood lengths for the purpose of sale. Among the voluntary agencies, may be mentioned the soup-kitchen, which is supported by subscriptions, and which dispenses soup gratis to the children attending the elementary schools, and to other persons at prices far below the actual cost of production. So soon as there is any improvement in the weather, the Council will be able to employ a considerable number of men in levelling one or two roads, and they propose to put this in hand as soon as possible.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The Council are unable to make any suggestions of the nature asked for.

Tredegar Urban District (Monmouth).

Population (1891), 17,341. Assessable Value (1892–93), £40,905.

Letter from *J. A. Shepard*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this district, which is entirely due to the severe weather.

2. The Council have put on 54 men who are out of employment at breaking limestone for metalling the roads in their district at 1*s.* 6*d.* per cubic yard, and they have also put on some at labouring work by the day at 2*s.* 6*d.*, 2*s.* 8*d.* and 3*s.* per day, according to the worth of each man. This is the average daily number relieved for the week ended on Saturday last, the 16th instant, and at the present time the Council have employed 65 men who are out of work.

3. There is not an unemployed register maintained, but the names of those out of work who have been employed by the Council are entered in the usual Surveyor's wages book.

4. The Chairman has no further suggestions for the purpose of relieving such distress.

TROWBRIDGE URBAN DISTRICT (WILTS).

Population (1891), 11,717. Assessable Value (1892–93), £29,648.

Letter from *T. S. Hill*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this town beyond those thrown out of employment by the severity of the weather.

2. To meet the distress now existent this Council has opened a stone yard, but the daily number of persons who have availed themselves of this work does not exceed one dozen. A soup kitchen, a relief fund, and a bread and coal charity are in operation, and these fairly cope with the present exigencies.

3. A register for the unemployed is kept with satisfactory results.

4. No further suggestions to make as affecting this district.

TUNSTALL URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 15,730. Assessable Value (1892–93), £43,064.

Letter from *G. Wilks*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is some exceptional distress within the Tunstall Urban District, which is mainly, if not entirely, owing to the severe weather.

2. For some time past such distress has been alleviated by myself and a committee, by the distribution of soup, bread, coals, and relief tickets for other provisions available at the shops, also by free dinners to the necessitous children of the town. Relief has and is being afforded by voluntary agencies in addition. I have no information in my possession as to the number relieved, but should think, totalling all sources, it would reach 6,000 a week.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. The distress, as before stated, being temporary in its character, I do not think I can suggest any course, other than that which is being carried out, for the purpose of relieving it.

USK URBAN DISTRICT (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 1,447. Assessable Value (1892–93), £4,619.

Letter from *C. Voyce*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is some distress in the district due to the severe weather, but it has been met by the relief measures taken.

2. The Council provided stones and offered employment in breaking same for the roads, but the offer has been availed of in two instances only. A committee was formed some weeks since. A large proportion of this committee is made up of members of the Council, and I am the treasurer. This committee has, during the week ending 16th instant, relieved 90 persons by means of tickets representing so much value which are available at any of the local shops. In addition, 90 school children per day have been given coffee, bread, cheese, cake, or buns. The funds have been raised chiefly by subscription, but a concert, organised for the purpose, to be held to-morrow will supplement the funds considerably.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained, but the committee is thoroughly acquainted with every case in the district from personal visits made by sub-committees of the committee.

4. I do not think I am in a position to aid by offering any suggestion on this point.

WARDLE URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 3,952. Assessable Value (1892–93), £15,054.

Letter from *J. T. Worth*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district. No unemployed register kept.

WARMINSTER URBAN DISTRICT (WILTS).

Population (1891), 5,563. Assessable Value (1892–93), £14,727.

Letter from *H. J. Wakeman*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THE distress in this district is greater than usual, attributable: (a) To the severe and lengthened frost; (b) depressed state of the agricultural interest; (c) the closing of silk factories in the district.

2. The local authority has found employment for some; voluntary agency has distributed coals and soup; the Board of Guardians has relaxed the ordinary relief rules to meet exceptional cases.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. The locality is competent and prepared to deal with the existing state of things.

WELLINGTON URBAN DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 6,808. Assessable Value (1892–93), £15,801.

Letter from *O. G. Walter*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THE great majority of our labouring poor are regularly employed in the local woollen manufactories, and are not specially affected by the present severe weather. A small minority are so affected, but need only to be helped over the present pinch.

2. To meet this, individual employers are finding extra jobs in woodcutting, &c., and a voluntary committee is at work daily in distributing relief in the form of bread, coal, and soup to known and investigated cases, of which a record is kept to prevent fraud and overlapping. The daily average number in the district (co-terminous with the parish) is about 85 receiving organised help. There seems at present to be no need for action of any public authority beyond that within the powers of the Board of Guardians.

3. A register of the unemployed has, I believe, been made, but with little result hitherto. As soon as the severe weather breaks up there will be no lack of employment.

4. The above practical steps for relief are working well so far, and I have no suggestions to make.

WESTHOUGHTON URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 11,077. Assessable Value (1892–93), £35,327.

Letter from *J. Partington*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

So far there has not been any exceptional distress in the district of the Westhoughton Urban Council, as it is principally a cotton manufacturing and coal mining district, and these industries have not been affected by the severe weather, and as far as can be ascertained there is not that amount of distress in the district which requires any special attention.

WHITWORTH URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 9,766. Assessable Value (1892–93), £32,717.

Letter from *O. March*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THE exceptional distress in this district is entirely due to the severe weather.

2. On January 30th, the District Council resolved, "That with a view to the relief of the men out of employment, the Surveyor be authorised to employ as many men as he can, or may be necessary, to remove snow from all the roads and footpaths in the district." This has been done, and the work is going on now. All men who apply are set to work for three days, in some cases longer; then a change is made, and others set to work, and the others come

on

on again. We have no difficulty in dealing with our own ratepayers. Voluntary agencies are at work extensively, some of the quarry masters relieving all their own workmen by giving them tickets for food, &c., weekly. We have no means of getting the exact number, but two agencies are known to be relieving 300 families weekly.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. This Council are advised that they have done all they can, and the only difficulty they have is to know whether they will be surcharged by the auditor for the amount expended.

WILLESDEN URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 61,265. Assessable Value (1892–93), £300,689.

Letter from *James Stewart*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. I AM unaware of any exceptional distress in this district beyond that due to the present inclement weather, and consequent cessation of all building operations.

2. The condition of the weather renders it impossible to meet the distress by the execution of any work at present, but 300*l.* has been expended in the removal of snow, and it is the intention of this authority to advertise for the carrying out of upwards of 14,000*l.* worth of road and sewer work immediately the Local Government Board accord sanction to a loan for such work.

3. No unemployed register is maintained, but the names of all the men applying to the District Council Offices for work are inserted in a book, and when opportunities arise the men having priority in the list are engaged.

4. I have, unfortunately, no suggestions to make for the purposeof relieving the distress, although my Council have on more than one occasion considered the matter. It is, however, so difficult a question to decide that we are now leaving it in abeyance until we hear the decision arrived at upon the same question by the Committee of the House of Commons now sitting.

WINDERMERE URBAN DISTRICT (WESTMORLAND).

Population (1891), 2,252. Assessable Value (1892–93), £ ———.

Letter from *G. H. Puckle*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district, beyond the temporary inconvenience caused by cessation of outdoor work on account of the frost.

WIRKSWORTH URBAN DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 3,725. Assessable Value (1892–93), £8,741.

Letter from *J. Gratton*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. A public meeting has been called, and a committee formed, to obtain subscriptions and distribute relief tickets, and a soup kitchen has been opened. A sum of 150*l.* and upwards has been collected (including therein a balance in hand of 35*l.* from previous years). About 30*l.* a week is being spent in relief in the form of free tickets for coal and groceries to the value of 2*s.* 6*d.*, and tickets entitling the holder to have one quart of soup from the soup kitchen for one penny. In this manner 181 tickets at 2*s.* 6*d.* each for coal and groceries have been issued during the week ending the 16th instant. Each applicant, whether male or female, is required to fill up a card, giving information as to number of children, age, and employment, &c.

The relief is given principally amongst the poor and aged people, and where there are large families amongst the poor; also where the parent or parents are working short time in the limestone quarries, or mills, &c. When the present frost ceases the committee believe that there will be no occasion to continue the relief.

3. No unemployed register is kept; a register of relief tickets is kept.

WOMBWELL URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 10,942. Assessable Value (1892–93), £36,623.

Letter from *J. Robinson*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this locality, except among very few who are engaged in the building trade, caused by almost general stoppage in that trade through the frost, and hitherto there has not been any sign of privation.

2. Should the necessity arise, the above authority would take the initiative, and sufficient voluntary help would be promptly rendered.

3. No register has been necessary; with the exception of collieries and a pottery, the Council employ the largest number of labourers, and these have had full time and full pay.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

BELVOIR RURAL DISTRICT (LEICESTER).

Population (1891), 3,191. Assessable Value (1892–93), £ ———.

Letter from *The Duke of Rutland*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. Nothing is being done by public authorities or voluntary agencies.

3. No such register is maintained.

4. I have consequently no suggestions to make for relieving exceptional distress in this district.

BEVERLEY RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, EAST RIDING).

Population (1891), 11,468. Rateable Value (1892-93), £ ———.

Letter from *T. H. Sample*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

So far as I am aware, there is very little of what may fairly be called "exceptional distress" in this district. Owing to the long continuance of the very severe weather, a somewhat larger number of people than is usual have been out of work, and some of these have no doubt had a hard time. The applications for relief at the Board of Guardians have only been of the ordinary kind, and not more in number than usual at this time of the year. I have not heard of any special agencies being called into operation to take action in the matter; what has been done has been in the way of private charity. This district is purely an agricultural one; and as field work is now considerably in arrears, when the frost breaks up I think there will be no lack of work for those who are able and willing to do it.

BLYTH AND CUCKNEY RURAL DISTRICT (NOTTINGHAM).

Population (1891), 4,654. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. S. Whall*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE does not appear to be any exceptional distress in the district, except that at Carlton-in-Lindrick the coal miners working at Shireoaks Colliery are suffering from short time.

There is no unemployed register.

BOSTON RURAL DISTRICT (PARTS OF HOLLAND).

Population (1891), 19,219. Rateable Value (1892–93), £ ———.

Letter from *C. Moore*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is not any general exceptional distress in the district; what there is is solely due to the long-continued severe weather, which has thrown painters, bricklayers, and a few others out of their regular work.

2. In large parishes, soup, bread, &c., have been distributed by funds raised by local subscribers. The average daily number so relieved I cannot supply, but I may say that every needy person has been attended to if known.

3. I am not aware of any unemployed register being maintained in any parish.

4. The only suggestion I have to make is as to temporary aid to respectable artizans (not paupers), to enable them to tide over the long period they are thrown out of work, which in some few exceptional cases might be of great utility.

BURFORD RURAL DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 1,361. Rateable Value (1892–93), £ ———.

Letter from *W. Foster*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

THERE is no distress in this Rural District.

CASTLE DONINGTON RURAL DISTRICT (LEICESTER).

Population (1891), 6,393. Rateable Value (1892–93), £ ———.

Letter from *J. Shields*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

THIS District Council includes Castle Donington, Hemmington, Isley Walton, Lockington, Dissworth, and Langley. There has been a good deal done, both by private and public, to assist the poor in this frost; we have had, in this Rural District, arranged by the Guardians of the Poor, to give 4 cwt. of coal to the poor, at the rate of 2 cwt. per week each. There has been good round sums subscribed to soup kitchens, &c., for the maintenance of the poor. All the places, with the exception of Castle Donington, are not suffering, but Castle Donington has not, I believe, been in such a bad state for the last 50 years. It is owing to the basket-making trade being so slack, which is the chief industry, and I may say that the basket-makers have not been able to make more than two days a week since September last. Next to the basket-making trade comes the labourer, and nothing can be done on the farms while the frost is so hard, so that it makes things in a very bad state. All the other places in this district are at present not so badly off, as at Kegworth there is the hosiery trade, which is doing fairly well, and at Breedon there is the lime-works, which is also doing fairly well; and at all the other places the farmers employ most of them.

CHEADLE RURAL DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 22,302. Rateable Value (1892–93), £117,837.

Letter from *C. J. Blagg*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

IN my opinion there is no exceptional distress in our district, and whatever is required, arising from the severity of the weather, is fully met by a soup kitchen which has been started, and by gifts of coal, and otherwise, from public and private charity. I may mention that the staple employments here are principally mining and factory work, and these occupations are not interfered with by the severe weather, so that we do not suffer as much as many neighbourhoods.

CHELMSFORD RURAL DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 23,174. Rateable Value (1892–93), £138,965.

Letter from *W. W. Duffield*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE is no great extent of destitution amongst able-bodied men in this Union at the present time, although there are individual cases of labourers (principally mechanics) who have been out of work for a short time by reason of the long-continued frost. This is confirmed by the fact that at the meeting of the Guardians on Tuesday last there was no exceptional number of applications for out-door relief. In the borough of Chelmsford the only special relief that has been afforded by means of charity has been the establishment of soup kitchens, which have been supported by private subscriptions, and have been found very acceptable to the poor. What the effect of any further long continuance of the severe frost may be it is impossible at present to say.

CHICHESTER RURAL DISTRICT (WEST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), —. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *E. Pride*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in my district, which, however, is a very small one.

2. Nothing being done by public authorities or voluntary agencies.

3. No unemployed register maintained.

4. No suggestions to make.

CLOWN RURAL DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 6,830. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. S. Whall*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is not any exceptional distress in the district.

3. There is no unemployed register.

CRANBROOK RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 13,730. Rateable Value (1892–93), £65,270.

Letter from *T. H. Crampton*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. A LARGER number of labourers than usual out of work owing to the frost, and severe agricultural depression.

2. Instructions have been given by the District Council to give employment as far as practicable on roads. Church and other voluntary agencies are distributing coal, soup, and bread, &c., to necessitous families.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. As regards the Cranbrook District it is now too late in the season for the District Council to provide special employment for the unemployed. This being a purely agricultural district, and the labourers being dependent on that industry, a return to remunerative prices for agricultural produce is, in my opinion, the only way of affording employment for labourers generally in times like the present.

EASTBOURNE RURAL DISTRICT (EAST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 4,266. Rateable Value (1892-93), £41,561.

Letter from *G. Homewood*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

THERE is not any exceptional distress in this district.

EAST AND WEST FLEGG RURAL DISTRICT (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 9,210. Rateable Value (1892-93), £58,144.

Letter from *C. Diver*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is distress in the district arising from the severe weather, but not of an exceptional character.

2. The Guardians have carefully considered cases and administered relief, but the applications have been comparatively few. In this purely rural district all cases of distress are known and reached by private benevolence and charity.

3. An unemployed register would answer no purpose here.

4. There are no suggestions to be made.

EAST GRINSTEAD RURAL DISTRICT (EAST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 11,509. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *W. V. N. Stenning*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

A LOCAL Winter Aid Society is doing much, and private charity much more, to relieve temporary distress. This distress is caused by a severe frost which has lasted seven weeks, and stops work in the fields and woods and hinders other local industries. I think there will be work enough to employ most of the present unemployed men as soon as the weather moderates.

GAINSBOROUGH UNION {GAINSBOROUGH / MISTERTON} RURAL DISTRICTS {PARTS OF LINDSEY. / NOTTINGHAM.}

Population (1891) {Gainsborough, 15,078. / Misterton, 3,733.} Rateable Value (1892-93), £145,260.

Letter from *F. Mercer*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

I DO not think that there is in our Union any exceptional distress, as it happens that our town industries are not hindered by the frost, and the only men who are out of their regular work are the bricklayers and their labourers, and these have helped themselves largely by sweeping ice for skaters, &c.; and as for the country parishes, I specially asked, at our meeting of Guardians yesterday, any Guardian to speak as to the state of things in their village, and one only spoke of there being eight or ten out of work in his village, but that they were being helped by private charity, and others spoke hopefully of there being plenty of work again in a week or two's time, and that the men would tide over that. Certainly we have had no unusually large application for relief this spring so far.

GUILTCROSS RURAL DISTRICT (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 10,228. Rateable Value (1892-93), £55,822.

Letter from *A. T. Clowes*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is some distress, but not any exceptional or considerable amount of distress, in this district. What exists is due to the severe weather.

2. There has been nothing to call for action by the public authorities. Private charity has relieved many.

3. There is no register. The unemployed are few in number, and what there are might find employment near their homes. Work at a distance would be useless, as the men could not obtain lodgings near the work. Upon my making inquiries of the Guardians present, at their meeting on Monday last, as to whether there were unemployed in their respective parishes, the general answer was that there were none, and in some instances none except a few who were voluntarily away from work. Two Guardians stated that they could employ more men if they could find them.

4. I have no suggestion to make, unless it be that Article 1 of the Out-door Relief Prohibitory Order of 21st December 1844 be modified so as to admit of the Guardians having the power to give out-relief to an able-bodied man with a family who is temporarily thrown out of work by the severity of the weather, such to be deemed sudden and urgent necessity, but I am not certain that this would be prudent, as if even only one or two deserving cases were thus relieved, it would be a pretext for very numerous applications from others who prefer relief to work, and it would be very difficult for the Guardians upon applications suddenly made to discriminate between the really deserving and those who are not so. On the 4th instant two able-bodied men with families applied for temporary relief upon the pretext that they were out of employment by reason of the weather preventing their performing work that they had to do. The Guardians could only give them orders for the workhouse, which were not accepted. I was subsequently informed that these two applications were made at the suggestion of a new Guardian, with the object that what he supposed was merely the practice of the former Board of Guardians might be altered. In this thinly-populated district the labour test would be almost impracticable.

I have just had an interview with the Relieving Officer of the Union, who agrees with what I have written, and who informs me that he knows of no exceptional distress in the district.

HALIFAX RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 8,424. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *A. T. Longbottom*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. IN one or two of the contributory districts of the Council there is distress owing to the severity of the weather, and not through any exceptional circumstances in the particular localities.

2. The highway authority have employed men to clear the main streets of snow, and in some of the districts soup kitchens have been opened by voluntary agencies, and the worst cases have been relieved in this way.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. I have no suggestions to make as to the relieving of the district in future.

HARTLEPOOL RURAL DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 2,657. Rateable Value (1892-93), £28,902.

Letter from *G. Kilvington*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE is not any exceptional distress in the rural portion of this Union. The population, excluding salt works in the parish of Greatham, is entirely agricultural.

HEADINGTON RURAL DISTRICT (OXFORD).

Population (1891), 10,847. Rateable Value (1892-93), £50,570.

Letter from *J. White*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, due almost entirely to the exceptionally severe weather.

2. Nothing has been done to meet the distress by public authorities beyond offering the house to able-bodied men, several of whom (single men) have availed themselves of the offer. They cannot be employed at any work during this hard frost.

3. No unemployed register has been kept hitherto.

4. The Guardians might have power given them to relieve able-bodied men of good character (as distinct from the loafer), and who are out of work through no fault of their own, out of the house in money or in kind, or in both, during this exceptional weather.

KINGSCLERE RURAL DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 8,868. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Barnes*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THE Board of Guardians were of opinion that there is no exceptional distress in this Union.

LOUTH RURAL DISTRICT (PARTS OF LINDSEY).

Population (1891), 21,367. Rateable Value (1892–93), £189,366.

Letter from *P. Wilson*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress has come to the knowledge of this District Council.
3. No unemployed register kept.
4. No suggestions to make.

NEWARK RURAL DISTRICT (NOTTINGHAM).

Population (1891), 7,207. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *R. Washington*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

So far as I am aware, there is no exceptional distress in the rural parishes of the Newark district; should any arise, I have no doubt my Council will take immediate steps to cope with the same.

NORTHAMPTON RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 6,449. Rateable Value (1892–93), £70,349.

Letter from *W. Tomalin*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is very little exceptional distress in the area of this Council. A small number of workers on the land are out of employment in consequence of the frost, but this is regarded as a temporary matter. In the rural portion of the Northampton Union, men have had out-door relief, and have performed a task of stone-breaking.
2. Nothing is being done by the public authorities, or by voluntary agencies to meet the distress.
3. No unemployed register is kept.
4. No exceptional distress existing, I have no suggestion to make.

PATRINGTON RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, EAST RIDING).

Population (1891), 8,430. Rateable Value (1892-93), £80,677.

Letter from *J. Garton*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. IN this district we have very little distress; what we have is caused by the severe weather.
2. Help has been given in most cases by voluntary agencies.
3. No unemployed register kept.
4. No suggestions to make.

RIPON RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 5,790. Assessable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *C. F. P. Edmundson*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THERE is very little distress in this district.

RUTHIN RURAL DISTRICT (DENBIGH AND FLINT).

Population (1891), 9,845. Rateable Value (1892–93), £75,794.

Letter from *R. H. Roberts*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is not any very exceptional distress in the district, and what does exist is owing to the severe weather.

2. The labourers who, in an agricultural district such as the Ruthin Rural is, are chiefly employed by farmers, are, as far as possible, kept on by the employer in doing odd jobs or other work, so that the bread-winner is not allowed to be completely out of work, and consequently without means of providing food for his family. Again, several of those who reside in the town, and are apt to loiter about, and not as a rule, in constant employ, have been to a great extent employed by the public authorities of the town in doing certain works of improvements; and work has also been provided by private individuals in making drives, or other improvements on their estates, chiefly with a view to giving relief in this way. It is impossible to say the exact numbers who have been employed by public authorities outside the district of the Ruthin Rural Council; the Council itself has not considered it necessary to take any steps by providing work.

3. No unemployed register is kept, inasmuch that distress does not exist in this district to the extent of requiring any such list to be kept.

SLEAFORD RURAL DISTRICT (PARTS OF KESTEVEN).

Population (1891), 18,121. Rateable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *E. Clements*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no distress of an exceptional character in the Sleaford Rural District.

2. No action necessary by Council.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

SPILSBY RURAL DISTRICT (PARTS OF LINDSEY).

Population (1891), 24,987. Rateable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *J. W. Preston*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is not much exceptional distress in this district, except, perhaps, in the small towns; many of the agricultural labourers have migrated into the larger towns outside this district, the farmers, owing to the long-continued agricultural depression, being simply unable to find money to pay more than the actually necessary labour.

2. At Alford, soup is supplied to those in distress by voluntary efforts; I cannot obtain numbers of those relieved.

3. No unemployed register kept.

STOCKPORT RURAL DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 10,159. Rateable Value (1892–93), £52,248.

Letter from *J. Chetham*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. I BELIEVE there is, at the present time, no exceptional distress in the Council's district. Their district is small in extent, the chief centre of the population being Hazel Grove, a manufacturing village whose inhabitants are principally engaged in the cotton and hatting industries.

2. Nothing is being done by public authorities or voluntary agencies.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

UTTOXETER RURAL DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 12,027. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *W. G. Reed*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no very exceptional distress in the district, and what there is, is mainly due to the severe weather.

2. The distress is being met by local public charities and by voluntary contributions. The average number would be about 100 per week.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. The local authorities feel that they will be quite able to deal with any distress out of the charities and voluntary subscriptions.

WEST PENWITH RURAL DISTRICT (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 18,200. Rateable Value (1892–93), £71,801.

Letter from *T. H. Cornish*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

THE distress in this district is mainly caused by the depression in tin-mining, and the stopping of a tin mine in the parish of St. Just. The miners out of employ have been temporarily relieved by a grant from the Cornish Miners' Distress Fund. This, no doubt, will be supplemented by a further grant shortly.

WHITCHURCH RURAL DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 2,899. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *R. P. Ethelston*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district. The district is purely agricultural. The farmers, as a rule, have found work for their regular labourers all through the severe weather. Of course, there are a few men such as drainers, and workers at odd jobs, out of work, but so far there does not appear to be any real distress among them.

2. There is no voluntary agency in the Rural District. Able-bodied men can get work at the Union Workhouse, and are paid according to the size of their families. Since 5th February there has been an average of eight men working there, but only one man out of this district has applied there for work.

3. There is no unemployed register kept in this district.

York Union { Escrick / Flaxton / Bishopthorpe } Rural Districts { (York, East Riding). / (York, North Riding). / (York, West Riding). }

Population (1891) { Escrick, 5,364 / Flaxton, 6,279 / Bishopthorpe, 1,855 } Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Leeming*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. There has been no exceptional distress in the district.

2. The distress that usually exists at this period of the year is relieved by voluntary aid.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

Bermondsey Parish.

Population (1891), 84,682. Rateable Value (1892–93), £429,102.

Letter from *F. Ryall*, Vestry Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is, undoubtedly, exceptional distress in this parish, due to the severity of the weather, as an instance of this the chief sanitary inspector reports that there would be employed under his notices on sanitary works a very large number of men, bricklayers, plumbers, labourers, carpenters, and plasterers, but owing to the weather all work of this class has been suspended. This time last year over 800 men were being employed on this work; all building work on model dwellings and warehouses has been suspended from the same cause.

2. The Board of Guardians have done all in their power to alleviate the distress, having employed during the last six weeks 27,000 men, breaking stone and picking oakum, having no other work available, it being desirable not to enter into competition with outside labour. Seventeen thousand five hundred meals have been provided during the last fortnight for the poor of this parish by the aid of funds publicly subscribed, in addition to which the religious bodies in the parish have been making great efforts to alleviate the distress.

3. The Vestry maintain an unemployed register of those who have lived in the parish for two years, and there are at present 1,287 names on same. The method of employment adopted is to take on 25 different men every two days.

4. The Chairman of the Vestry would respectfully suggest that the Local Government Board be empowered to sanction a payment, chargeable to the common poor law fund, to enable the Guardians to vote any sum in their discretion required by the Vestry of the parish where exceptional distress exists, to enable the Vestry to give work of any kind they think fit for the unemployed.

Poplar District Board of Works.

Population (1891), 166,748. Rateable Value (1892–93), £701,405.

Letter from *W. H. Farnfield*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

I am directed to reply to the effect that the District Board has done its duty in the matter referred to, as will be seen by the enclosed reports of the controller, and the expression of a hope that the Local Government Board will in due course re-imburse the District Board the money expended. The reports detail all the proceedings of the District Board connected with the engagement of the unemployed, and it is unnecessary to reiterate them. I may mention that the extra wages paid by the District Board to-day amount to 50*l.* 4*s.*

(Reports above referred to.)

Provision of Work for the Unemployed.

To the Chairman and Members of the Board.

Gentlemen,

It will be remembered that at the last meeting of the Board, on the 22nd January, there being some evidence of snowfall, the sum of 300*l.* was voted to provide for wages of men that might be engaged in the necessary work of removal.

The necessity for commencing operations arrived on the morning of the 23rd ultimo, and since that date there have been, as is well known, other snow showers.

The

The following table shows the number of men engaged on the several days when extra help has been needed, and the amount paid on each day :—

1895.	Number of Men.				Wages.
	Poplar.	Bow.	Bromley.	Total.	
					£. s. d.
23 January	92	91	101	284	56 16 –
28 January	112	121	141	374	74 16 –
30 January	42	60	77	179	26 17 –
1 February	164	150	204	518	103 12 –
2 February	123	200	250	573	114 12 –
	533	622	773	1,928	376 13 –

The total number of extra men engaged, therefore, in the five days has been 1,928, at a cost of 376*l.* 13*s.* Many men, of course, had more than one day's work.

A representation having been made by the Board of Guardians that in the struggle to obtain work the weakest probably went to the wall, an arrangement was made by which men to whom letters of recommendation were given by the relieving officers secured priority when labour was engaged. This system has been found to answer very well. Lists of names have also been forwarded by the vestry clerks of Bow and Bromley, and the men have been called from such lists.

In every case each man when taken on has been asked his place of residence, and, in fact, every care has been taken to ensure that only those men who reside in the district should be employed.

We are, &c.

Leonard Potts, Controller.

G. F. Holt, Surveyor.

To the Chairman and Members of the Board.

Gentlemen,

In continuation of the report presented to the Board at the last meeting by which it was shown that up to and including the 2nd February instant, the sum of 376*l.* 13*s.* had been expended in snow removal, I beg to submit the following statement recording the number of men engaged in snow removal and road sweeping in addition to the regular staff, and the sums paid daily for extra labour in accordance with the directions of the works committee from the 6th to the 19th instant, and the same particulars for stone-breaking from the 9th to the 18th instant :—

Snow Removal and Road Sweeping.

1895.	Number of Men.				Wages.
	Poplar.	Bow.	Bromley.	Total.	
					£. s. d.
6 February	142	300	250	692	138 8 –
7 February	42	50	50	142	28 8 –
8 February	55	50	50	155	31 – –
9 February	82	100	100	282	56 8 –
11 February	100	101	104	305	61 – –
12 February	98	94	95	287	57 8 –
13 February	94	99	96	289	57 16 –
14 February	94	°98	101	293	58 10 –
15 February	94	97	98	289	57 16 –
16 February	89	100	98	287	57 8 –
18 February	96	103	98	297	59 8 –
19 February	86	88	88	262	52 8 –
	1,072	1,280	1,228	3,580	715 18 –

° 1 at 2*s.*

The system adopted has been to send out postcards each day to the number of men required for the following day ; the names and addresses being obtained from lists forwarded by the respective vestry clerks of Poplar, Bow, and Bromley. After the men written to have been taken on, stone-breaking has been offered to the general body presenting themselves for work to the limit of 100 men, and the following shows the number who accepted from day to day and the wages paid :—

STONE-BREAKING AT BOARD'S DEPÔT.

1895.	Number of Men.	Number of Yards.		Day Work.		
				Number of Men.	Rate.	Wages.
			£. s. d.		s. d.	£. s. d.
9 February	24	19	3 16 –	1½	4 –	– 6 –
11 February	18	18	3 12 –	2	4 –	– 8 –
12 February	8	8	1 12 –	1	4 –	– 4 –
13 February	21	21	4 4 –	1	4 –	– 4 –
14 February	34	22⅔	4 11 –	2	4 –	– 8 –
15 February	36	33½	6 14 –	1	4 –	– 4 –
16 February	45	42⅔	8 11 –	2	4 –	– 8 –
18 February	43	41½	8 6 –	3	4 –	– 12 –
	229	206½	41 6 –	—	—	2 14 –

STONE-BREAKING AT ROSS'S WHARF.

1895.	Number of Men.	Number of Yards.		Day Work.		
				Number of Men.	Rate.	Wages.
			£. s. d.		s. d.	£. s. d.
11 February	26	17½	3 10 –	5	4 –	1 – –
12 February	45	45	9 – –	9	4 –	1 16 –
13 February	50	50	10 – –	6	4 –	1 4 –
14 February	48	48	9 12 –	6	4 –	1 4 –
15 February	54	54	10 16 –	4	4 –	– 16 –
16 February	53	53	10 12 –	12	4 –	2 8 –
18 February	52	51	10 8 6	11	4 –	2 4 –
	328	318½	63 18 6	—	—	10 12 –

At first some difficulty was experienced owing to the men desiring to be paid at day-work rate instead of at the piece-work rate of 4*s.* per yard offered by the committee, but when it was found that the sum of 4*s.* could be readily earned in a day by the men who tried the experiment, and these were drawn from all classes of labour, numbers clamoured for the task, and many had to be refused. Those who accepted stone-breaking were not debarred from road-clearing, but received their postcards in due course.

The total of the above with the sum before expended, viz., 376*l.* 13*s.*, amounts to 1,211*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.*; of this 600*l.* has already been voted by the Board, another 600*l.* is now asked for as additional expenditure, the bank having granted an overdraft to the clerk, and it remains for the Board to determine if the work is to be continued on the same lines or whether some other proceeding should be adopted.

I am, &c.

Leonard Potts, Controller.

ROTHERHITHE PARISH.

Population (1891), 39,255. Rateable Value (1892–93), £210,809.

Letter from *J. J. Stokes*, Vestry Clerk, 21st February 1895.

I BEG to refer you to my letter[c] of yesterday's date on the matter, and also to supplement the same by the following particulars :—

Unemployed Statistics, 11th to 18th February, 1895.

Number of postcards sent out	90
Number of men who responded	82
Number of men sweeping	48
Number of men screening ballast	7
Number of men breaking stone	21
Number of men on sewers	6
Total worked	82

[c] This communication was a reply to the Local Government Board's Circular Letter of 11th February 1895, relative to the provision, in times of exceptional distress, of work for the unemployed, and stated that to relieve the distress caused by the protracted frost a register had been opened of residents in the parish who were out of employment; that the register contained the names of 68 persons; that 1,326 days' work had been given at a cost of 287*l.* 8*s.* 9*d.*, preference being given to married men with families; and that men had been started upon breaking stones and screening ballast; and the Vestry had increased the sweeping staff and set men working upon new sewers.

Average

Average number of postcards sent out during the week, 15 per day, at a cost of 17*l.* About 20 more postcards would have been sent daily had it not been that work had to be found for the Vestry's own masons, labourers, rammermen, and general labourers, who had to be put to do work which would have been done by the unemployed had the weather been favourable for outdoor repairs.

St. George in the East Parish.

Population (1891), 45,795. Rateable Value (1892–93), £187,800.

Letter from *H. Thompson*, Vestry Clerk, 21st February 1895.

The Chairman is of opinion that there is no exceptional distress in the parish beyond that which is due to workmen being thrown out of employment through the severe weather, and that he believes that any distress which may exist is well met by the several charitable agencies in the district.

The Chairman regrets that he is unable to furnish you with particulars as to the average daily number of persons relieved by each of the agencies during the week ended 16th February.

The Vestry keep a register of persons out of employment who apply to them for work, the number of such applications since the 1st January last being only 14.

St. Giles District Board of Works.

Population (1891), 39,782. Rateable Value (1892–93), £414,593.

Letter from *G. P. Willoughby*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. So far as this Board are aware there is not any exceptional distress in the district.

2. The Board are finding work for as many men as possible; till recently a large number of men have been engaged in removing the snow, and since that was disposed of, the engineer and surveyor has been employing additional men in the scavenging of the public ways, but I am bound to say that the men employed are of a class of casual labourers who do not seem likely to ever obtain constant employment at any time, owing to their failure to give a fair day's work for a fair day's wage. The Board are not aware of the efforts of any voluntary agencies within the district.

3. A register of unemployed persons seeking work has been kept at these offices since the year 1887. I regret, however, to say that the officers report that the result is not satisfactory, and that the register is not made use of by employers seeking workmen.

4. If it is considered a duty that work should be found for every unemployed workman, the burden should not be cast on local authorities, unless a grant from Imperial or other public funds in aid of local rates is made, otherwise the burden would be too heavy, especially in the case of highly-rated parishes like those forming this district, where the rates, which were already high, have been increased, in consequence of the London Equalisation of Rates Act, to 6*s.* 8*d.* in the pound.

The Board have recently determined on the works to be carried out in the district during the ensuing year, and steps are being taken which shall ensure their commencement as soon as practicable.

Shoreditch Parish.

Population (1891), 124,009. Rateable Value (1892–93), £682,476.

Letter from *F. M. Wenborn*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

In reply to your circular letter of yesterday's date, I have written to the Chairman of the Select Committee offering to give evidence, and intend, if invited, to take with me the fullest particulars of the steps taken in the Parish of St. Leonard, Shoreditch, with reference to the matter in question.

St. Pancras Parish.

Population (1891), 234,379. Rateable Value (1892–93), £1,588,848.

Letter from *A. A. Millward*, Vestry Clerk, 21st February 1895.

I transmit the enclosed statement relating to the relief granted to the unemployed during the past week in this parish.

The number of men who have been employed in stone-breaking during the present week is—

On Monday	105	On Wednesday	92
„ Tuesday	94	„ Thursday	93

(Statement before referred to.)

STATEMENT showing the Relief granted during the week ended 16th February 1895 to the applicants described as "Unemployed" owing to the severe frost; and the quantity and value of the work performed by the men employed in the labour yards at stone-breaking in respect of the Relief granted to them.

Ward No.	Number of Men.	In Money.	Number of Men.	In Kind.						Gross Totals in Money and Kind.
				Coals.	Grocery.	Meat.		Bread.		
		£. s. d.		s. d.	£. s. d.	lbs.	£. s. d.	4lb. loaves.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
1 North	11	5 1 6	38	3 cwt. = 3 9	1 2 –	179	4 9 6	227	2 16 9	13 13 6
1 South	36	16 19 6	163	—	—	421	10 10 6	617	7 14 3	35 4 3
2 "	38	16 19 6	39	—	—	108	2 14 –	183	2 5 9	21 19 3
3	18	7 – –	20	—	– 8 6	69	1 14 6	76	– 19 –	10 2 –
4	–	—	28	—	4 2 –	77	2 4 11	118	1 9 6	7 16 5
5	26	12 13 9	53	—	2 – –	100	2 18 4	300	4 7 6	21 19 7
6	84	37 5 6	139	—	3 – 6	550	16 1 5	602	7 10 6	63 17 11
7	11	5 5 –	11	—	– 6 –	34	– 17 –	43	– 10 9	6 18 9
8	42	16 5 6	58	—	1 12 –	268	6 14 –	220	2 15 –	27 6 6
TOTALS –	266	117 10 3	549	3 9	12 11 –	1,806	48 4 2	2,386	30 9 –	208 18 2

			£. s. d.
Total number relieved in money	266	Total in money	117 10 3
Total number relieved in kind	549	Total in kind	91 7 11
GROSS NUMBER	815	GROSS TOTAL	£. 208 18 2

The total number of men who were employed at stone-breaking was 266.
The approximate quantity of stone broken was 60 yards.
The estimated value in money of the stone broken, *i.e.*, of the labour performed, is 12*l.*

Note.—The men employed by the Vestry in stone-breaking earn 2*s.* 9*d.* per yard, but the material is much easier to break than Guernsey granite; about 1 yard broken of the latter would be equal to 1¼ yards of the stone broken in the Vestry yard.

STRAND DISTRICT BOARD OF WORKS.

Population (1891), 25,122. Rateable Value (1892-93), £550,246.

Letter from *W. Emden*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE has been considerable distress in the district in consequence of the difficulty of following outdoor occupations, but this district cannot be considered as one which contains any very great number of outdoor workers working in the district. There is no doubt that this distress has been largely felt in the Clare Market district and in parts of the Soho district.

2. So far as possible the Strand Board of Works have given employment by taking on the largest number they possibly can of the unemployed at each period at which there have been either snow or heavy cleansing of the streets to do. There are a number of voluntary agencies, mostly in the hands of the clergymen of the district, and an application addressed to them would be productive of more certain information than we can possibly give. We enclose a copy of the Return, showing the amount paid this year by the Strand Board in extra labour to be 601*l.* 18*s.* 8*d.*

3. An office has been opened at the St. Martin's Town Hall, called the Labour Exchange, for the joint districts of the Strand District Board and St. Martin's-in-the-Fields; the superintendent is Mr. Lind, and the working of the Exchange is under the control of a joint committee of the two Boards. The reports from this joint committee are of a satisfactory nature, and I enclose a copy of the last printed Report, but I believe it is not found that the large mass of the unskilled unemployed derive much benefit from such exchanges at present.

4. Taking into consideration that the population necessarily increases, and that Great Britain is of only a limited area, a *bonâ fide* effort by the State to encourage emigration is, in my opinion, the only means of coping with the difficulty.

(Return

(Return before referred to.)

RETURN of Employment found for the Unemployed by the Board of Works for the Strand District, in the removal of Snow.

Date of Fall.	Number of Men employed in addition to Staff of over 100.	Paid Off.	Wages.
			£. s. d.
Sunday, January 13th	173	Sunday night, January 13th	117 18 2
Tuesday, January 22nd	225	Wednesday morning, January 23rd	99 16 7
Sunday, January 27th Monday, January 28th	315	Tuesday morning, January 29th	153 18
Thursday, January 31st Friday, February 1st Saturday, February 2nd	540	Saturday evening, February 2nd	160 16 9
Wednesday, February 6th	176	Wednesday evening, February 6th	69 9 2
TOTAL number of Men employed	1,429	TOTAL expenses in labour in Snow removed to February 7th, 1895.	601 18 8

(signed) *Arthur Ventris*,
Surveyor to the Board.

(Report before referred to).

THE Joint Labour Exchange Committee appointed by the Vestry of St. Martin-in-the-Fields and the Strand District Board of Works for the purpose of establishing a Labour Exchange for the benefit of unemployed persons (male and female) residing in the various districts comprising the above-named Vestry and Board of Works beg to report as follows :—

The Labour Exchange was opened on December 4th 1893, at St. Martin's Town Hall, Charing Cross-road, a superintendent and an assistant being engaged.

Prior to the Joint Exchange being opened there had been two separate exchanges in existence, with the result that only a few men were found employment, and that only temporary.

Since December 4th 1893, the Joint Labour Exchange has registered 1,129 persons (874 males, 255 females), comprising an almost indefinite variety of trades ; and, naturally, amongst so many there has been a number totally unfit for work, such as cripples and old people.

Notwithstanding this, the result of the work of the Joint Labour Exchange (viz., 359 engagements, or 31 per cent. of the total registered) compares more than favourably with any other exchange in London, particularly when it is taken into consideration that the number of men engaged by the Vestry of St. Martin-in-the-Fields and the Strand District Board of Works only numbers 2 ; whilst at Islington, out of a total number of engagements (1,707), there have been no less than 858 men employed by the Vestry, or equal to over 50 per cent. At Battersea the total engagements amounted to 761, out of which the Vestry employed 211, or 27 per cent. of the total.

There have been 215 employers who have applied for different people, and there is no reason to doubt but that, with increased facilities as regards offices and accommodation, and with the experience already gained, the Joint Labour Exchange will in another year show a large increase in the number of persons who obtain employment through its agency.

The expense incurred by the Joint Labour Exchange also compares favourably with others.

Numerous letters have been received from employers stating their approval of the Labour Exchange.

Subjoined is an analysis of the persons registered and engaged, &c. :—

	Registered.	Engaged.
Males (skilled)	263	100
„ (unskilled)	507	117
Females (skilled)	115	35
„ (unskilled)	140	38
Boys	104	69
TOTAL	1,129	359

BALANCE SHEET.

Receipts.	£. s. d.	Expenses.	£. s. d.
St. Martin-in-the-Fields - - - - -	95 - 5	Salaries—Superintendent and Assistant, 57 weeks.	154 10 -
Strand District Board of Works - -	95 - 5	Office Fitting, &c. - - - - -	20 5 11
		Printing, Stationery, &c. - - -	14 15 5
		Advertisements - - - - -	- 9 6
£.	190 - 10	£.	190 - 10

II.—COUNTY BOROUGHS.

BOLTON COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 115,002. Rateable Value (1892–93), £444,000.

Letter from *W. Nicholson*, Deputy Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. EXCEPTIONAL distress prevails within the Borough at the present time, but this is due to the severe weather.

2. For the purpose of meeting the distress the following agencies have been in operation :—

(*a*) A Committee of the Council, who have collected funds and distributed the money received amongst certain of the voluntary agencies undermentioned. This Committee is also acting upon the letter of the Local Government Board of the 11th February instant, by finding employment as much as possible for hands out of work.

(*b*) A fund raised and administered by the Mayor. By means of this fund parcels of meat, bread, tea, and also hot-pot dinners have been provided, the average daily number so relieved for the week ended Saturday 16th February being 1,607.

(*c*) Poor Protection Society. This is a permanent institution which provides money, clothing, bedding, and coal ; the average daily number so relieved for the week above referred to was 602.

(*d*) The Queen Street Mission is also a permanent institution providing relief in connection with religious services. In the week referred to daily meals have been provided for children and adults, the daily average being 2,100 ; other relief in food, coal, and clogs have been supplied to the number of 100 per day.

(*e*) The Irish National League. During the week referred to this organisation provided a meal of soup, beef, and bread for 1,770 persons, being an average of 295 per day. In addition, 500 loaves were given to women and children.

(*f*) Kay Street Mission distributed food and clothing to 3,400 persons being an average of 566 per day.

(*g*) Rev. Canon Wood, R.C., relieved in food, children and adults to the average number of 205 each day.

(*h*) The Vicar of St. Thomas's Church, Halliwell, relieved in soup, bread, and coal, men, women, and children to the daily average of 85.

(*i*) A number of gentlemen provided children, to the daily average number of 183, with a hot-pot meal in the Halliwell Ward part of the Borough.

(*j*) Mr. Joseph Sharman has supplied bread to persons to the daily average of 500.

(*k*) Bolton Parish Church Sunday School. Here have been provided dinners for the children attending the School to the number of about 50 per day.

(*l*) Mr. W. Harrison, Stag's Head, Daubhill, has supplied bread to persons to the daily average of 150.

(*m*) Hot-pot dinner has been provided for children in All Saints' Church School to the average of 76 per day.

Beside the foregoing, much private benevolence, the extent of which cannot be ascertained, has been exercised. In calculating the above averages, Sunday has not been reckoned.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained at the present time. Such a register was commenced about 18 months ago, but served a very little, if any, use.

4. I am not prepared to make any suggestion under this head.

BURY COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 57,212. Rateable Value (1892–93), £243,121.

Letter from *J. Hall*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. So far as I have been able to ascertain, I cannot find that there is at the present any exceptional distress in this district, which is not being met by the agencies hereafter mentioned.

This Local Authority has various works in progress, viz. : Sewage Works, Electric Lighting Station, and extensions to Recreation Grounds, but these have been delayed by the severe weather. Still, much employment has been found as a consequence of these works.

2. Free

2. Free meals are being given to poor children, about 400 per day participating. These have been arranged by private individuals, and by the ministers of various denominations.

3. The unemployed register has been discontinued, as it was found that the unemployed did not sufficiently avail themselves of its advantages.

4. I am of opinion that whenever in times of very severe distress in consequence of the weather, many persons well-known to be industrious and thrifty are thrown out of employment, there ought to be some system devised by which corporate bodies should be enabled to grant loans out of corporate funds to be repaid when employment is again plentiful. It is well known that many persons such as above described, will not accept parish relief, and some scheme, it seems to me, such as above mentioned, might be drafted which would meet these scruples and afford them necessary assistance.

For other cases, there should, I think, be wider powers given to the Guardians of the Poor to enable them to extend the present system of out-door relief in order to meet exceptional circumstances in a way that is now not possible.

CROYDON COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 102,695. Rateable Value (1892–93), £589,756.

Letter from *C. M. Elborough*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

(1) THERE is exceptional distress in the district, due entirely to the severe weather.

(2) The Board of Guardians have opened their stone-yard. The Corporation have started works, of which particulars are undernoted, and which, sooner or later, with the exception of water carrying, it would have been necessary to execute. The Croydon Charitable Society and the South Norwood Samaritan Society have made special efforts to relieve the distress, und have raised special funds for the purpose. The average daily number relieved by the Guardians, the Corporation, and the Charitable Society during the week ended Saturday the 16th February was as follows :—

The Board of Guardians admitted 1,530 to the stone-yard ; 988 of these were relieved once, and 542 twice. The Corporation employed 1,065 men for an average of two days a week each. The Croydon Charitable Society relieved 1,030 families.

The following details may be of interest :—

(*a*) The works started by the Corporation are ;—The drainage of the new cemetery, the laying out of which was sanctioned by the Board on the 7th July 1894. For this work 695 of the unemployed have been taken on, of whom 327 have three or more children. The work has been proceeding since the 5th instant, and this week every married man who has applied for work to the Borough Engineer will have one day's work, and all married men with three or more children two days.

(*b*) Levelling land for the purpose of irrigation in connection with the South Norwood Farm, belonging to the Corporation. This employs 90 men for about two days per week each.

(*c*) Demolishing some houses purchased for the purposes of the High-street Improvement, under the Croydon Improvement Act, 1890. This has given employment to a few men.

(*d*) Painting at the Corporation Water Works at Addington. This has employed 40 out-of-work painters two days a week each.

(*e*) Delivering water from stand-pipes to houses of which the services are frozen. This gives two days' work per week each to each of 240 out-of-work men.

(*f*) The Croydon Charitable Society, a society which has been in existence for many years, has taken special measures to relieve distress, and, in answer to appeals made by the Mayor on behalf of the Society, about 1,200*l.* has been subscribed, of which, to the present date, about 1,000*l.* has been applied in grants of food or fuel varying from 7*s.* to 5*s.* per week in value according to the number of children in the families relieved. Relief has been granted to about 1,660 families, some for one and some for two weeks.

(*g*) In South Norwood, within the borough, the South Norwood Samaritan Society, a society which has been in existence for some years, resolved on Saturday last to take special measures, and to obtain special contributions for the relief of distress among the unemployed.

(*h*) Numerous voluntary agencies are at work for providing meals and other assistance.

(3) No unemployed register is maintained.

(4) The Mayor has no suggestions to offer.

The Mayor desires me to state, that whilst probably in some cases dissatisfaction exists, upon the whole, he is of opinion that the measures detailed above have sufficiently mitigated the distress which otherwise would have been severe owing to the weather.

GREAT YARMOUTH COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 49,334. Rateable Value (1892-93), £176,889.

Letter from *T. M. Baker*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE has been this Winter no exceptional distress in this borough, except to in some slight degree during the late frost.

2. The Council have at the present moment 200 additional men (over and above their ordinary staff) employed in road cleaning, levelling the beach, and in drainage works—100 of whom have been at work since Christmas, and the 200 for three weeks. There are several voluntary agencies in the borough for relieving distress, which have been doing good work.

3. No unemployed register is maintained in the town.

Halifax County Borough.

Population (1891), 89,832. Rateable Value (1892–93), £357,502.

Letter from *K. Walton*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. The distress in the Borough of Halifax is exceptional. It is due in some degree to the general dulness of the trade in the district, but is found chiefly among out-door workers, such as quarrymen, masons, and bricklayers, and is owing, for the most part to the severity of the weather.

2. The Halifax Corporation is not at present doing anything, as a corporation, to meet the distress, though I may say that we are now waiting for the sanctions of the Local Government Board to the borrowing of several sums for the carrying out of various permanent works, which will be commenced as soon as the sanctions are received, and will, no doubt, give employment to a considerable number of men now out of work. The Mayor, however, nearly a month ago, opened a relief fund, which has been generously subscribed to by the inhabitants of the borough, and now amounts to about 1,000*l.* This fund is being distributed by ward committees, in the shape of one shilling tickets for food and fuel. The average amount so distributed per day during last week was 37*l.* 18*s.* Not more than 5*s.* worth of tickets is given to any person at one time. In addition to this, in the poorer parts of the town soup kitchens have been opened, and breakfasts are being given to the children at the Board Schools.

3. A few years ago a register was opened in Halifax for the unemployed, but practically was not made use of by them. I may say that as many men as possible have been recently employed in removing snow from the streets. The number taken on by the sanitary department for this purpose from time to time has been about 1,350, the men being varied each day, so far as possible. Altogether 425*l.* has been expended by the corporation in this way among those who are out of employment.

Hanley County Borough.

Population (1891), 54,946. Rateable Value (1892–93), £179,642.

Letter from *E. J. Hammersley*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this Borough, which is partly due to the severe weather, partly to the slackness of trade in the potting industry, and partly the result of a coal strike last year which has made a corresponding depression in the iron industry. During the last three or four weeks this particular branch of industry seems to be recovering, although from the best information I can obtain, prices are at present unremunerative. With regard to the exceptional distress from the severe weather, in many cases the distress amongst bricklayers, bricklayers' labourers, plasterers and their labourers arises from lack of thrift.

2. With regard to the relief afforded, this is being dealt with almost entirely by voluntary agencies. Up to the present time I have not thought it fit to supplement such agencies by any official appeal for help The voluntary agencies are efficient and numerous so far as I have been able to judge, and it is reported to me that hitherto they have been able to cope with the distress. I have been in daily communication with these agencies, particularly with the Charity Organisation Society which has done very valuable work in the way of relief. This Society, in addition to its ordinary course of daily administering relief, has placed funds in the hands of the head teachers of the public schools to be distributed by them in kind for the relief of the more necessitous children. The voluntary agencies also include a labour yard, free breakfasts to children and dinners to adults, soup kitchens, and the distribution of soup and bread by private persons. Various charitable contributions have been sent to me for aiding the voluntary agencies, and I have reason to believe that up to the present time such agencies have been able to grapple with any distress which has arisen and made itself known in this Borough.

3. An unemployed register is maintained by the Charity Organisation Society, but it is not greatly resorted to. Masters and men seem to prefer direct communication with each other.

4. Proper provision by State aid administered through the "Guardians of the Poor" without entailing disenfranchisement, or the stigma of pauperism should be made.

Leicester County Borough.

Population (1891), 174,624. Rateable Value (1892–93), £650,295.

Letter from *Geo. Green*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. There has been exceptional distress, it was peculiar to the locality; it still lasts, but the circumstances have altered.

(*a*) Displacement of labour occurred recently in the shoe trade, one of our largest industries, by the introduction of machinery.

(*b*) This displacement is likely to be permanent, as it is middle-aged men, fathers of families, who are displaced, which intensifies the distress.

(*c*) The action of Trades Unionism in combining into a system two principles, a minimum of wage and a maximum of work, enforced by an espionage and fines, has probably added to the numbers in the street.

(*d*) The frost threw out of work many labourers, servers of masons and bricklayers, also navvies attracted to the town by new railway works.

(*e*) The result is that while the shoe trade, as the season opens, is subtracting from the mass of the unemployed, it remains at this date but little diminished.

2. Nothing has been done this year by the public authorities other than the Guardians, who relaxed their rules as to the relief granted to out-of-work applicants.

(*a*) Volunteer agencies have been active this year. The Trades' Council established a system of daily relief by tickets for food and fuel. About 1,200*l.* has been contributed, Sir Israel Hart, Deputy Mayor, being Treasurer of the Funds, which are now, after eight weeks work, nearly exhausted.

(*b*) Free

(*b*) Free breakfasts to all poor children attending the elementary schools have been given for six weeks, over 1,500 children participating daily, Sundays excepted.

(*c*) Other charitable persons have instituted soup luncheons, or Cinderella suppers, for which the shopkeepers have liberally sent in provisions.

3. A registry of the unemployed, started and kept up by the Trades' Council, shows that on December 19th the number on the list was 2,000, one half of whom were shoe-hands. On February 19th the number on the list being about the same, one-third only were shoe-hands. (*See* 1., *a*, *b*, *c*.)

4. As to suggestions: On my own responsibility do I make them, after conversation with a few of my fellow magistrates.

(*a*) The cultivated acreage of these islands as to its ratio to population is decreasing. This implies that some modification of the conditions which uncultivated land rests upon is desirable.

(*b*) The produce per acre, great as it is in these islands compared with other countries, would be doubled were more labour employed. This implies that the conditions on which cultivated land is occupied require re-consideration.

(*c*) In districts where large farms prevail, the labour employed per acre is less than it is where small farms are general. Arable lands are not so profitably worked as formerly, but products of the farm, other than grain, are but little depreciated, and as these require personal labour and attention it is again modifications as to rent, term and tenure, that are implied.

(*d*) One suggestion is therefore obvious: that areas of cultivable land should be placed under State control, the unemployed placed thereon under State superintendence, loans being granted on liberal terms as to re-payment, periodical revision of the same being made, and fixity of occupation secured.

(*e*) Voluntary emigration has been great, continuous, and successful. Involuntary emigration might be employed with similar results under certain circumstances, such as habitual vice, consecutive criminality, hereditary pauperism, all of which swell the ranks of the unemployed.

(*f*) Old-age pensions granted to the indigent whose record of honest industry has been maintained, powers being given to local bodies to raise the funds.

(*g*) Let each locality, according to its contributions to the Imperial Revenue by the Income Tax, be entitled to a certain proportion of that tax, also to a certain proportion of the Customs and Excise Duties, according to its population, for the purpose of a fund on which to base its system of old-age pensions.

As an individual, rather than as an official, I make this reply.

LIVERPOOL COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 517,980. Rateable Value (1892-93), £3,204,897.

Letter from *W. H. Watts*, Lord Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. ALTHOUGH I have not the special means of obtaining information which are possessed by the Poor Law Authorities, I may say in my judgment, and having regard to such information as has been laid before the public, that the distress now existing cannot be considered exceptional as compared with the state of things in previous years, but that there is a considerable increase of privation in consequence of the great severity of the weather, which prevents the workmen engaged in many trades from following their several callings.

2. The only public authority empowered to relieve the poor is, of course, the Board of Guardians, and I have no doubt you have communicated with them upon the subject. Very considerable efforts have, however, been made by means of voluntary agencies to relieve the distress, and I believe that I am right in stating that the immediate wants of the destitute have been fully met. I have much pleasure in stating that the members of the Police Force are acting as agents in the distribution of a large amount of food. I have the following memorandum from the Head Constable's Department upon the subject:—

"21 February 1895.

"The daily average number of persons relieved by the police during the 12 days ended the 20th instant, with soup and bread tickets, &c., is about 8,000. This number does not include relief tickets sent to the police at Divisional Stations by private donors. During the three days ended the 20th instant, the police have relieved 1,611 families at their homes with coal, grocery, and bread tickets, making a daily average of 533 families."

There are, moreover, in addition to this a very large number of other agencies, the details of whose operations it would be almost impracticable to obtain even after very full enquiry.

3. The Corporation have established a Labour Bureau, mainly for the purpose of obtaining information as to suitable workmen for the Municipality, but they allow workmen and masters to make general use of it. The result of the establishment of this Bureau is somewhat disappointing, although every effort has been made to secure its success. A considerable number of persons have, however, been registered, and a moderate number have obtained employment through this agency.

4. I have no suggestions to make as to the means of relieving the present distress. I need not point out that the Corporation are not empowered to expend the funds under their control for the purpose. All they are able to do is to endeavour to carry out, at such times as will best assist the unemployed, works which they are legally authorised to execute.

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 75,532. Rateable Value (1892-93), £229,688.

Letter from *W. L. Taylor*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

OWING to the severe weather we have had in this district during the past few months, as well as to other causes, there have been a large number of workmen thrown out of employment, and in consequence thereof, they, along with their families, have suffered great distress. The majority of these cases were able-bodied, and therefore the Middlesbrough Board of Guardians consider they are cases which do not come within their province, and accordingly decided not to take any steps to alleviate the wants of such persons. The Board, however, requested me to establish a Charity Organization Society, and enclosed I send you a copy of my reply thereto, dated 26th of January. Again no special steps were taken by the Middlesbrough Board of Guardians to relieve the exceptional cases of distress, and at their next meeting they resolved to ask me to re-consider my decision. A copy of my reply, dated 15th February, is sent herewith. The wants of such persons were afterwards attended to by the ministers of churches and chapels, as well as by other organizations in the town.

I would now point out that I am not aware of any Act of Parliament which requires a Mayor of a Municipal Borough to take steps to relieve distress, and seeing that the Poor Law Acts and the Orders of the Local Government Board cast such duties on the Board of Guardians, I am of opinion that a Mayor should not be asked to undertake their duties. In the winter months there are always a large number of able-bodied men out of employment, and in all thoroughly deserving cases I consider that the Guardians should be allowed to exercise their own discretion in dealing with such cases. If the Local Government Board are unable to see their way to adopt this suggestion, then I think it would be advisable to transfer the powers and duties of the Guardians to the Town Council of every Municipal Borough.

A register of the unemployed is not kept in Middlesbrough, and the Corporation have no employment for them.

(Letters before referred to).

Dear Sirs, Middlesbrough, 26 January 1895.

I AM in receipt of your letter of the 21st instant, and in reply thereto I regret to say that I am unable to accede to the request therein contained. That there are a large number of deserving persons in need of temporary help I do not doubt, but I would remind you that it is a legal obligation of the Board of Guardians to devise the best means of relieving such cases, and considering that the ratepayers of this borough provide them with the money as well as with the necessary staff of officials, it seems very strange indeed for the Board to ask that honorary officers should undertake their duties. There are, moreover, no funds available for the purpose, and I see no reason why the duties of the Guardians should be performed by others who do not possess the powers conferred by the Poor Law Acts and the several Orders of the Local Government Board.

Yours, &c.

The Chairman and Members of the Board of Guardians, Middlesbrough. (signed) *W. L. Taylor*, Mayor.

Dear Sir, Middlesbrough, 15 February 1895.

IN reply to your letter of the 14th instant, asking me to revive the Charity Organization Society, I beg to say that I think it will be necessary to entirely reconstruct the society.

I therefore nominate the 42 members of the Board of Guardians for the Middlesbrough Union as the committee, with the Chairman as treasurer for that purpose. Towards the subscription list I shall be glad to do my share along with the Guardians, and on hearing of the appointment of the treasurer will forward him a subscription of 1*l.* 1*s.*

The appointment of the Guardians as the committee will enable them to avail themselves of the services of their officials to successfully work the society, and seeing that it has been done recently at Gateshead, I see no reason why the same course should not be followed in Middlesbrough.

Yours, &c.

The Clerk to the Guardians, Middlesbrough. (signed) *W. L. Taylor*, Mayor.

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 61,012. Rateable Value (1892–93), £194,334.

Letter from *W. Shoosmith*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the Borough of Northampton, except that caused by the severe weather.

2. The Town Council have provided work for the unemployed at 3*d.* per hundredweight, limited to 10 cwt., or 2*s.* 6*d.* per day for stone-breaking, and 2*s.* for street scavenging or other light employment. An order is given by the Guardians to the Borough Surveyor with the name of the person wanting employment; varying from one to five days' work per week, according to the number in the family. The Surveyor finds the work according to the strength and capacity of the man. About 200 men have been employed. The amount expended from 19th December to 16th February, 174*l.* 18*s.* Average number employed per day, 52.

Voluntary Agencies.

A relief fund, under which 15,000 quarts of soup and 15,000 lbs. of bread have been distributed. Also meat and groceries, &c. Committees sit twice a week and relieve from 80 to 100 families.

Average number relieved per day, 40.

Good Samaritan Society.

Visit homes of the poor and supply children with clothes. One hundred and forty children have been clothed by the society.

ST. HELENS COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 71,288. Rateable Value (1892–93), £285,354.

Letter from *W. J. Jeeves*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE has been during the present winter an exceptional amount of distress prevalent within this borough' owing principally (1) to the closing, in consequence of the liquidation of the London and Manchester Plate Glass Company, Limited, of their two plate glass works employing about 1,100 hands; (2) to the temporary and partial stoppage of a number of alkali works; (3) to most of the collieries having been worked short time for a considerable period; and (4) to the severe and prolonged frost, as a result of which many men have been prevented from following their usual employment.

2. In order to assist in the alleviation of the distress the corporation have, amongst other things, pressed forward and obtained the sanction of the Local Government Board to the expenditure of some 15,000*l.* for sewerage works, which have now been in progress for some time, and have taken in hand the execution of other works of sewerage at an estimated cost of some 10,000*l.* They have also endeavoured to find temporary work for casual men, such as stone-breaking, and the removal of snow, &c.

In

In addition to efforts made by private individuals for the relief of those in need, the Mayor has raised a fund, at present amounting to upwards of 1,100*l.*, which is being distributed by a special committee through the agency of the St. Helens Charity Organisation Society, and from which 375 families were relieved during the week ended the 16th instant.

I enclose an extract from the St. Helens newspaper of the 16th February, which gives a short account of the steps which have been taken for the relief of the distress.

3. No unemployed register has been opened.

(Newspaper Extract above referred to.)

Since the latter end of November last there has been a large number of men unemployed, and unfortunately in St. Helens, as elsewhere, certain classes of workmen only need to be out of regular work for a week or two before they and their families are in a state of semi-starvation. Consequently, it is a matter for sincere congratulation that so early in the season the relief fund was inaugurated, which will make Mr. Councillor Martin's mayoralty long to be remembered. By its aid some three to four hundred families have been provided with food for the past three months, and in almost every case, but for this relief, there was nothing to turn to but the workhouse. A reasonable estimate of the number of persons sharing in this relief is about two thousand per week, and when the deserving character of the applicant is vouched for by the Charity Organisation Society, who have made searching inquiries into the circumstances of each case, the benefits conferred upon the community may be better realised. It is to the credit of the subscribers to the fund that the much-needed money has been freely and generously given, and there now seems every probability of being able to tide over the winter before the funds will be exhausted. The total amount received is over 1,100*l.*, and subscriptions amounting to 40*l.* per week are being continued. The Whitecross Colliery Company have been for several weeks, and are still giving 10 tons of coals per week, and this week an anonymous donor has made a present of 24 tons of coal for distribution, and gifts of bread, to the extent of 400 loaves, have been received from Messrs. Charles Wilcock and Son. Altogether it is very satisfactory to see that provision has been made for our poor this year in a manner which St. Helens has not previously known, and more especially in such a period of depression, when tradesmen and others are scarcely in a position to make the necessary sacrifices in order to provide for their poorer neighbours.

South Shields County Borough.

Population (1891), 78,391. Rateable Value (1892-93), £292,832.

Letter from *J. M. Hayton*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is undoubtedly exceptional distress in this Borough, which is due partially to the unemployment of men in the shipping trade and shipbuilding yards on the River Tyne, and partly consequent upon the severity of the weather.

2. To relieve the distress the Town Council are now expending a sum of 600*l.* recently sanctioned by the Local Government Board in relief works (*i.e.*) levelling for Park Extension purposes. About 120 men are weekly employed in this way in relays of 40 men every two days at 3*s.* per day each man. Application has also been made for the sanction of the Local Government Board to the borrowing of an additional sum of 1,400*l.* for the construction of a lake four acres in extent in the West End Park by means of relief labour. This sanction has not yet been received. A General Fund for the relief of the distressed has also been started in the town by the Mayor, and already about 200*l.* has been contributed by the inhabitants. A soup kitchen has been opened, and about 700 families are being daily relieved in this way, whilst others are being supplied regularly with food and coals. A fund has also been commenced by the Mayor for the relief of distressed children to which upwards of 200*l.* has up to the present been contributed. This is being expended in supplying the children with free breakfasts and dinners, and 1,500 breakfasts are daily supplied to children, and about 650 dinners are given on every week day. In the most needy cases both breakfasts and dinners are supplied to the young people. A great amount of good has been done by means of many other voluntary agencies and by private individuals in providing free meals and clothing for the poor.

3. The relief labour works commenced a week ago, and a list of the persons employed has been kept. The men who are being employed are selected with great care by a sub-committee appointed by the Council, several of whom are in touch with the most deserving cases amongst the unemployed. Of course all this is being done by the Town Council and the general public, apart from the action of the Board of Guardians.

Stockport County Borough.

Population (1891), 70,263. Rateable Value (1892-93), £240,725.

Letter from *W. Hyde*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. The trades in the town being depressed, has caused a lack of employment, and, consequently, distress, but, the main cause of that exceptionally existing is the long-continued frost, which has put a stop to all out-door employment.

2. The Board of Guardians is giving the usual relief: fourteen soup kitchens were established in various parts of the town on the 15th instant, and about 3,000 persons per day are being relieved by the distribution of soup, bread and potatoes.

3. No register is kept, but it is suggested that one be kept in some public building, so that persons out of employment might go and register their names.

4. Exceptional powers to be given to Boards of Guardians to enable them to relieve people who, through no fault of their own, are temporarily unemployed; burgesses obtaining such temporary relief should not be disfranchised, or treated as paupers.

West Bromwich County Borough.

Population (1891), 59,474. Rateable Value (1892–93), £192,671.

Letter from *R. Farley*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this borough, due both to depression in trade and the severe weather. Several ironworks have been closed through bad trade; many works have been on short time and consequent on this some collieries have been only partially employed, there being insufficient demand for coal. As regards distress from the severe weather, this town is intersected by canals, upon the banks of which most of the collieries are situate, and the works depend in a great measure for a supply of fuel by water carriage. The late severe weather has caused the canals to be frozen over, necessitating the partial closing of some collieries and works, while others have been completely stopped. There are also several large brickworks which have been unable to work from the same cause. The depression in trade has lasted a considerable period, and there appears little prospect of any improvement at present.

2. As to meeting the distress: The Corporation have established relief works, which were commenced in July last. This consists of levelling, digging, and wheeling earth, in laying out land on the Sewage Farm for sewage purposes. The number of men engaged on this work up to within the last month was about 50 and since that time 100 men have been so employed. Previous to the employment of the latter number the men were working full time or six days a week, but in order to give relief for the larger number, the men now work half time. The rate of wages paid is 3*s.* per day of nine hours in the winter months and 10 hours in the summer months. Six weeks before and after Christmas is considered the winter period. The Corporation have also engaged the unemployed in clearing snow at 2*s.* 8*d.* per day, the same as scavengers, the numbers varying according to circumstances.

As regards the engagement of the unemployed on the Sewage Farm the Corporation have secured the services of the Relieving Officers to make enquiries as to the *bonâ fides* of all applicants, and on their report the men are set on by the Borough Surveyor. Regard is had to the men being burgesses and able-bodied, married men with families being given the preference.

The Corporation do not get full value for the amount of money spent in wages.

As to voluntary agencies: A Mayor's Relief Fund has been established to relieve exceptional distress, and for the administration of this fund there is a general committee composed of the members of the Corporation, clergymen, and ministers, schoolmasters, and a large representative body of the burgesses. The town is divided into wards, with a chairman, secretary and committee for each ward. The committee is largely composed of working men. Each committee receives a grant weekly from the central committee according to its needs, and the ward committee investigates all cases and administers relief in the shape of tickets for food and coals, no money being given. A grant is also made by each ward committee to the various elementary schools for providing meals for the school children who require them. As to the number relieved from this fund for the week ended February 16th, I am unable to state this with any degree of accuracy, but the sum granted from the fund amounted to 140*l.* (the population of the borough being 60,000), and we know that in one ward at least the distress was so great that the largest sum granted to a family was 1*s.*

Besides the Mayor's Relief Fund, there is a great deal of private charity being dispensed through religious agencies, and otherwise.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

4. As regards suggestions:

(*a*) The Corporation consider that the Guardians of the Poor are primarily responsible for meeting exceptional distress.

(*b*) I am of opinion that if the Guardians are not empowered to grant out-door relief under exceptional circumstances without pauperising the recipients, such power might be conferred upon them under certain restrictions.

(*c*) Wherever Local Authorities have public works to carry out, such as the unemployed (in case of exceptional distress) might be usefully engaged upon, they should co-operate with the Guardians in providing such work; but in order that the amount expended on such works should not exceed the market value, and thus burden the district rate, the Guardians should provide the labour, and the Corporation should recoup them the ascertained value of the work done. This would cast any extra cost of the work on the poor rate which is leviable on the full rateable value instead of the district rate, on which railways, canals, and land pay only one-fourth. Another advantage of this system would be that the Guardians may, without infringing the Truck Act, give relief in kind, which the Corporation could not. The Guardians also have greater legal control of men, as in case a man does not do a sufficient amount of work, he can be taken before the Justices and dealt with. Our experience is that some of the men imagine work must be found for them, and that they must be paid their wages however little they do.

(*d*) Where no public works are desirable or contemplated, the Guardians could employ the men in stone breaking for the Local Authorities, or might be empowered to secure land to be cultivated by spade industry.

In conclusion, the subject of the unemployed has occupied the attention of the Corporation for the past four or five years, and each year work has been provided by them to meet the distress. The question has almost become chronic, and it is hoped that the labours of the Select Committee will result in the solution of this most difficult problem, to which end, if the Committee desire any further information or evidence on the subject, it will be willingly furnished by the Corporation.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Bacup Municipal Borough (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 23,498. Rateable Value (1892–93), £79,330.

Letter from *R. Hyde*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this borough at the present time amongst the quarrymen and other out-door workmen, and it is due entirely to the severe weather.

2. The Corporation have given employment to about 60 extra men for three weeks in the removal of snow from the streets. The Mayor opened a distress fund on the 15th of January last, and relief in food, clothing, and coal is given at the borough police office, under the superintendence of the chief constable. The fund is freely supported by voluntary contributions. The average daily number relieved by this agency during the week ended Saturday the 16th instant was 575; the average daily number this week is 778. There are about 700 men employed at the quarries in the borough, and an allowance of flour and other provisions, provided in some cases by the owners of the quarries, and in other cases by the quarrymasters, is distributed by the quarrymasters amongst their *employés* most in need of assistance. The average daily number relieved through this agency cannot be accurately ascertained.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained, and is not required, as the want of employment in this borough arises from the severe and protracted frost only.

4. The methods of relieving the distress adopted in this borough appear to meet the necessities of the case, and, as far as can be ascertained, give general satisfaction.

Bewdley Municipal Borough (Worcester).

Population (1891), 2,876. Rateable Value (1892–93), £8,186.

Letter from *T. Southerton*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. The distress in this borough has been occasioned chiefly by the severe weather, the labouring class being for the most part engaged in out door work.

2. Liberal support has been obtained from voluntary agencies, and the average number relieved during the week ended the 16th instant was 180.

3. No register has been maintained, as, the district being small, the unemployed are all well known.

4. I have no suggestions to make as regards this borough.

Bishop's Castle Municipal Borough (Salop).

Population (1891), 1,586. Rateable Value (1892–93), £6,558.

Letter from *B. Bowen*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. There is a temporary distress here, due entirely to the severe weather.

2. A soup kitchen has been established, and 918 quarts of soup, with 459 lbs. of bread, were supplied last week at a charge of ½*d.* per quart, with quarter of a loaf of bread included: 150 tickets for 2 cwt. each of coal were also given away, and the same is being done this week, which will exhaust our present funds.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. I have no suggestion to make beyond a continuance of the soup kitchen for a few weeks, if we only had the funds. Cost is about 5*l.* per week, and coal about 15*l.* per week.

Boston Municipal Borough (Parts of Holland).

Population (1891), 14,593. Rateable Value (1892–93), £43,735.

Letter from *R. W. Staniland*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is, I am afraid, exceptional distress in the district, which is, however, due only to the severe weather. A public meeting has been held, and over 250*l.* subscribed, which has been applied by a committee. I cannot give you the exact figures of the daily numbers relieved; 3,400, 6*d.* tickets, entitling the holder to purchase that amount at any shop, have been distributed, and soup kitchens are kept going.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

BRACKLEY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 2,591. Rateable Value (1892–93), £11,170.

Letter from *J. L. Stratton*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE has been distress in the town of Brackley, owing to the suspension of the works of the Manchester and Sheffield Extension Railway on account of the weather.

2. The distress has been met by soup kitchens and distribution of food; but I cannot state the average number of those relieved. I may add that, at the meeting of the Board of Guardians last week, there were no applications on account of exceptional distress.

BURTON-UPON-TRENT MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 46,047. Rateable Value (1892–93), £246,180.

Letter from *J. Parker*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. EXCEPTIONAL distress does exist owing to the prolongation of the very severe weather.

2. The distress which exists is amply met by the voluntary agencies.

3. The Corporation does not maintain an unemployed register.

4. I have no suggestions to make; the voluntary agencies appear to me quite sufficient at present.

CALNE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (WILTS).

Population (1891), 3,495. Rateable Value (1892–93), £10,240.

Letter from *H. Wilkins*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this neighbourhood.

2. Soup and coals are being regularly distributed.

3. We have no unemployed register.

4. No suggestions.

In further reply to No. 1, I might add, no exceptional distress beyond the capability of the authorities to cope with.

CHESTERFIELD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DERBY).

Population (1891), 22,009. Rateable Value (1892–93), £67,632.

Letter from *W. B. Robinson*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this borough owing almost entirely to the severe weather.

2. On the 14th instant a committee was formed and a public subscription opened for providing relief to the unemployed. Two hundred persons (the majority of whom had families dependent upon them) were relieved during the week ended Saturday the 16th instant.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained at present.

4. I have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving such distress beyond what is being efficiently done by voluntary effort.

CHRISTCHURCH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 3,994. Rateable Value (1892–93), £13,642.

Letter from *H. W. Jenkins*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the town and suburbs, except such as has arisen from the severe weather

2. Nothing has been done by any public authority, and, as one of the Board of Guardians, I believe there has not been more than six new applications for relief at that Board, arising from the severe weather, in the whole Union (of which this town is but a small part).

We have, however, formed a Relief Committee for the Borough and the immediate neighbourhood (of which the Mayor is chairman), and hope that we have received sufficient voluntary contributions to cope with the distress. It has been in existence from the 1st instant. The number of families receiving relief from this fund during the week ended 16th instant is 174, comprising about 730 individuals.

3. No unemployed register kept

4. No suggestions to make.

DORCHESTER MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DORSET).

Population (1891), 7,946. Rateable Value (1892–93), £29,145.

Letter from *H. Symonds*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no such exceptional distress in this Borough at the present time but what can be provided for by existing agencies. Where opportunity has arisen employment has been found for men thrown out of work by the prevailing severe weather. No register of the unemployed has, however, been opened. A society, called the Dorchester Charitable Aid Society, of which the Mayor is *ex-officio* president and I am honorary secretary, is actively at work in the town relieving, by means of voluntary subscriptions, administered through parochial committees, all cases of distress amongst the very poor. By this agency, during the week ended the 16th instant, 334 families, including 1,115 persons, were so relieved in kind, and this relief is still being administered. Considering the population of this Borough, I think this must be deemed satisfactory, and I believe it is generally considered so in the town. The exceptional distress, such as there is, has arisen from the severe weather.

DROITWICH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 4,021. Rateable Value (1892–93), £20,111.

Letter from *S. J. Tombs*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, due partly to depression in trade and partly to the severe weather.

2. The distress has been and is being met by voluntary subscriptions. The average number of families relieved in the week ended the 16th instant was 130, in addition to which the children in the National Schools and Coventry Charity Schools, to an average number of 240 per day, have had a substantial meal of soup and bread, as much as they could eat, given them at noon each day.

3. No unemployed register has been kept, but an active committee is daily at work in each parish finding out and relieving necessitous cases.

4. His Worship respectfully suggests, for the consideration of your Board, (*a*) that where special relief is given in times of exceptional distress, such relief should not disfranchise the recipient; and (*b*) greater facility should be given for raising loans for public works, specially opened for the purpose of providing employment for those thrown out of work in times of exceptional distress.

In addition to what is stated above, I should mention that Mr. John Corbett, of Tenbury, late Member of Parliament for this Borough, gives away 300 gallons of soup a week, also other private individuals in smaller quantities.

DUNSTABLE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (BEDFORD).

Population (1891), 4,513. Rateable Value (1892–93), £14,461.

Letter from *C. C. S. Benning*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THE severe weather is the cause of a certain amount of distress, which is not exceptional.

2. A Town Relief Committee has been formed. During the week ended 16th February about 200 cases have been relieved by tickets for bread, coal and groceries.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

Durham Municipal Borough (Durham).

Population (1891), 14,863. Rateable Value (1892–93), £47,862.

Letter from *E. Jepson*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. In this city the exceptional distress which has been lately felt here is chiefly due to the severe weather; there is always a certain amount of chronic distress in this town, but this was lately made acute by the intense frost. The chronic distress may be generally traced to the habits of the people, either from drunkenness or from gambling; they lapse into such a dissolute mode of living, that they decline to do work of any sort.

2. After a public meeting held on the 11th of February, a fund was raised and a committee formed, who at once commenced to relieve about 600 daily at a soup kitchen, by giving breakfasts to children at the schools to the number of about 700 each day, and during the week ended the 16th of February 171 families were supplied with coke.

3. We have no unemployed register.

4. All relief should be given in kind, and the children should be fed at least once a day, and shoes be found for the bare-footed ones, the teachers of the schools to keep an eye on the shoes supplied. When the labour test fails, then they can fall back upon the soup kitchen, which may be kept open all day. Really deserving cases should be hunted out by well-qualified persons, as we find that the deserving cases will rather suffer alone and in silence than make their wants public.

Glastonbury Municipal Borough (Somerset).

Population (1891), 4,119. Rateable Value (1892–93), £19,088.

Letter of *E. Bath*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in this district, although many labourers and artizans are temporarily out of employment in consequence of the severe frost.

2. In the week ended 16th February 245 tickets for 1*s.* 6*d.*, 2*s.*, or 2*s.* 6*d.* worth of coals, bread or groceries, according to the number in family, have been distributed from a public relief fund to those who are either without work or have only occasional employment, and this week 225 similar tickets have been given away. Considerable private charity is also being extended to the necessitous poor.

3. In a small town like this no register of the unemployed is needed.

4. No other suggestions occur to the Mayor or myself.

Glossop Municipal Borough (Derby).

Population (1891), 22,416. Rateable Value (1892–93), £57,811.

Letter from *T. M. Ellison*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this district, and the same is due in a great measure to the severity of the weather, and also to the mills working "short time" and bad trade generally.

2. The Council recently gave employment to a large number of labourers in the removal of snow. No other additional employment is at present provided by the Council; but see reply No. 4. The Mayor is not aware of the existence of any voluntary agencies to meet the distress.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The Council are about to construct works for sewage disposal and sewerage, but are awaiting the sanction of the Local Government Board for a loan of 40,000*l.* for the purpose. The Board are holding an inquiry by one of their inspectors on the 6th March next on the subject. The Mayor has no suggestions to offer, as it is difficult to see how the Council can afford employment at present.

GUILDFORD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SURREY).

Population (1891), 14,316. Rateable Value (1892-93), £73,877.

Letter from *Ferdinand Smallpeice*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is at the present time exceptional distress in the borough due wholly to the severe weather, and it is not likely to be of a permanent character.

2. The Mayor has formed a special relief committee which sits daily, and ample funds have been subscribed to meet the demands made on it. The average daily number relieved is 100.

3. The Corporation are engaging as many of the unemployed as possible in temporary work, such as the delivery of water, stone breaking, &c.

HARROGATE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 13,917. Rateable Value (1892–93), £89,507.

Letter from *W. H. Wyles*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is a good deal of exceptional distress in this district due almost entirely to the severe weather. The work in the building trades (which are the chief sources of employment) having been suspended for some weeks.

2. The Corporation have found occasional employment for 40 or 50 men in clearing the streets from snow, &c., and a voluntary relief committee has been at work for three weeks, and has been liberally supported; food and coal having been distributed amongst, on an average, 400 families. The relief has extended to the extra-municipal portions of the townships. The 400 families may be taken as part of a population numbering 20,000.

3. It has not been felt necessary to maintain a register.

4. The Corporation have no suggestions to make.

HARTLEPOOL MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 21,271. Rateable Value (1892–93), £60,795.

Letter from *Herbert W. Bell*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is distress in the district, which is mainly due to the severe weather.

2. A relief fund has been opened by the Mayor, Councillors, and gentlemen of the borough, and about 150 gallons of soup, 60 stone of bread, and 15 tons of coal have been given away each day for the last three weeks.

3. No register is maintained.

4. I have no suggestions to make, as now the severe weather has broken, the distress is diminishing.

HARWICH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 8,202. Rateable Value (1892-93), £24,819.

Letter from *A. J. H. Ward*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. SINCE Christmas the agricultural labourers in the parish of Dovercourt and the mechanics, shipbuilders, and quay porters, &c., in Dovercourt, and St. Nicholas, Harwich, have been almost entirely out of employment, and this want of employment has no doubt caused considerable distress and poverty amongst the class above stated.

2. The public authority has done nothing to meet the distress because they had no labour to offer the men; public sanitary matters having been impeded as much as private enterprises. Some additional men have, however, been put on the roads to clear away the snow, &c. It is not thought that any case has been left undealt with, and private charity has been sufficient up to the present to cope with the distress.

3. No register is kept.

4. The Mayor does not feel competent to offer suggestions upon so broad a subject as the relief of distress.

HAVERFORDWEST MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (PEMBROKE).

Population (1891), 6,179. Rateable Value (1892–93), £17,413.

Letter from *H. Davies*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THE distress which exists in this locality is strictly attributable to the present severe weather and the consequent want of employment amongst masons, labourers, artisans, and others, and not to any exceptional causes peculiar to the district, which is essentially agricultural.

2. Local public meetings have been recently convened, under the auspices of the Mayor, for the purpose of raising funds by means of voluntary contributions towards relieving the distress which may be found to exist within the borough amongst the local poor, and unemployed of a class who do not ordinarily have recourse to parochial relief. These meetings have been readily responded to, and voluntary agencies, organised for soliciting subscriptions, and the result has been so far very successful. Committees have also been appointed in different districts to investigate cases of distress and to distribute the funds amongst the necessitous poor and unemployed, in providing them with food, and finding them with employment according to their wants. Soup kitchens have also been established in convenient districts from which the poor people are supplied with excellent soup according to their requirements. The average number thus relieved daily has been from 120 to 150 families; each member of these families being supplied with a pound of bread and a pint of soup, where the children are above six years of age.

3. No register of the unemployed has as yet been kept here. These are not numerous, but on the whole they are fairly provided with work at wages averaging 2*s.* 6*d.* a day.

4. We have no special suggestions to make in regard to affording future relief, apart from the method now adopted, so long as the local funds will admit of their being carried out; and it may be expedient, if this inclement weather continues, to suggest that these voluntary efforts of relief should be supplemented by a small grant from the Imperial Exchequer.

HIGHAM FERRERS MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 1,810. Rateable Value (1892-93), £5,563.

Letter from *T. M. Coleman*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this borough, only that arising from the severe weather.

2. This being only of a temporary character, is being relieved by private charity; there is no necessity for the public authorities to intervene.

3. No register of the unemployed is maintained.

HONITON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DEVON).

Population (1891), 3,216. Rateable Value (1892–93), £12,362.

Letter from *G. T. Tweed*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this borough, and what does exist is owing to the severe weather.

2. Extra men out of employment have been put on to clear the streets of ice and snow by the borough authorities. Voluntary collections have been made in the town, and many poor have been relieved, about 200, during the week.

3. No unemployed register is maintained, but the unemployed are pretty well known.

4. The Council have no special suggestions to make for other boroughs.

KEIGHLEY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 30,810. Rateable Value (1892–93), £94,337.

Letter from *G. Burr*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

ALTHOUGH trade generally in this district is not considered very good at the present time, the depression is not so great as to cause serious alarm; but there is, and has been for many weeks past, a great amount of poverty, owing very largely to the prolonged and exceptional severity of the frost, as very many of the outside workers have had no chance of earning a living. In order to meet the distress, the Mayor, several weeks ago, organised a relief

relief fund, to which about 150*l.* has been subscribed, and he is receiving the hearty co-operation of the local society recently established to meet the needs of the destitute, known as the Charity Organisation Society, the result being that, on an average, 600 needy persons daily are supplied with bread and excellent soup. Coal, coke, and flour are also supplied to poor people by the same means.

The Corporation have employed men out of work, giving preference to ratepayers resident in the borough, in clearing away snow, &c., from the streets; but, at present, only the usual staff of men are employed.

The measures taken to relieve the distress in the borough are generally considered satisfactory.

There is no unemployed register kept by the public authorities at the present time.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SURREY).

Population (1891), 27,059. Rateable Value (1892-93), £120,186.

Letter from *G. C. Sherard*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. ALTHOUGH distress exists in this borough, it is considered to be mainly due to workmen being thrown out of employment in consequence of the recent severe frosts, and it is anticipated that the thaw that has now set in will shortly enable building and other out-of-door occupations to be resumed.

2. Upon it coming to my knowledge that distress was increasing in the borough, I convened a meeting of the clergy and ministers of all denominations, who represent most of the voluntary agencies in the borough for the alleviation of normal distress. I was by them informed that the distress, although undoubtedly existing, was not more than was generally experienced in cases of severe frost. I have opened a public subscription, and from the fund thus collected have been enabled to afford considerable relief by the distribution of coal, bread, and money. Among other voluntary agencies I may mention that a wood-chopping yard is being organised for the employment of men out of work.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained, to my knowledge.

4. I am not in a position, at present, to make any suggestions for the purpose of relieving distress other than those already in operation as above mentioned.

LANCASTER MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 31,038. Rateable Value (1892-93), £129,345.

Letter from *W. O. Roper*, Town Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE was no exceptional distress in the borough of Lancaster until the recent severe weather.

2 A committee of local gentlemen has been engaged for the past three weeks in distributing daily soup and bread to about 1,000 persons.

3. No employment register has been maintained this year within the borough.

4. The Mayor is of opinion that the existing distress is being adequately relieved by voluntary agencies within the borough.

LEOMINSTER MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (HEREFORD).

Population (1891), 5,675. Rateable Value (1892-93), £33,665.

Letter from *E. V. Gunnell*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, other than what is usually caused in an agricultural district by severe weather.

2. A soup and coal fund has been established by voluntary agency. Three distributions of soup, and two, and perhaps three, distributions of coal, are made every week to a large number of applicants.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The only suggestion I can make is, that there should be a permanent relief committee established in every town, to whom all applicants for relief should apply, and by whom each case should be investigated.

LICHFIELD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 7,864. Rateable Value (1892-93), £35,306.

Letter from *T. Walmesly*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, although many men are thrown out of employment by the severe weather.

2. I have opened a relief fund, which has been liberally supported, for the distribution of coal and bread, and much has been done by voluntary assistance. A soup kitchen is also opened daily for the supply of bread and soup.

3. No register of the unemployed is maintained.

4. I have no further suggestions to make, as I think the above means will meet the present requirements.

LLANFYLLIN MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (MONTGOMERY).

Population (1891), 1,753. Rateable Value (1892-93), £8,637.

Letter from *W. A. Pughe*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. NO exceptional distress prevails in this borough.

2. The poor are relieved with coal, bread, and soup by local charities and voluntary agencies. The number relieved is unknown.

3. An unemployed register is not kept. Work is provided for unemployed labourers by individuals resident in the borough.

LUDLOW MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SALOP).

Population (1891), 4,460. Rateable Value (1892-93), £15,183.

Letter from *J. H. Williams*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THERE has been exceptional distress in the borough. This exceptional distress has been due to the severe weather. To relieve this distress public meetings have been held and moneys collected. Under the active superintendence of a standing committee formed to deal with the matter, relief has been distributed in the shape of food and fuel. The fund thus formed has been handsomely supplemented by private donations given under the management of the committee. Besides which the Corporation has employed large numbers of men to remove the snow from the streets.

I ought, perhaps, to point out that in Ludlow the labouring class, as a rule, are employed in agricultural pursuits on the different farms in the neighbourhood. Naturally, therefore, during the winter months work becomes scarcer than in the summer months, and during the continuance of such weather as the present practically comes to a standstill.

LUTON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (BEDFORD).

Population (1891), 30,006. Rateable Value (1892-93), £112,669.

Letter from *G. Sell*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. CONSIDERABLE distress has been experienced in this borough during the current winter, and it is partly due to the dulness of the staple trade, viz., the manufacturing of straw goods during the autumn, and also to the continued frost, which has suspended building operations and out-door work generally.

2. The Town Council have exerted themselves to the utmost in finding work for the temporarily unemployed in the construction of new road and sewer works, the levelling and laying out of recreation grounds, the cultivation of sewage farm lands, the removal of snow, and the extra cleaning of streets.

The Mayor has initiated a fund for the relief of distress by the distribution of coals and bread at the Town Hall. A soup kitchen has been opened by the officers of the local rifle volunteer corps at their head-quarters, Park-street, Luton. Dinners are being given to numbers of children at the elementary and Sunday schools.

3. The Borough Surveyor has kept a register of the temporarily unemployed, so far as they have made application to him, at the Town Hall, and temporary employment has been found, say, for two or three days at one engagement for all of them. It is believed that the impartial and methodical distribution of this work has given considerable satisfaction in the town.

4. The Town Council during the whole of last year, both through your Board and rates, obtained loans and spent money for the purpose of giving employment to the class of persons referred to in your Query No. 4.

MONTGOMERY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (MONTGOMERY).

Population (1891), 1,098. Rateable Value (1892-93), £7,151.

Letter from *C. S. Pryce*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this borough.

2. A fund is now being raised by subscription to relieve the very poor; but there are very few cases in the borough, and these not very serious ones.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The above fund will be ample to relieve the cases existing.

NELSON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 22,700. Rateable Value (1892-93), £78,370.

Letter from *W. Hartley*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is distress within the borough at present consequent upon the severe weather, and not owing to circumstances peculiar to the locality. I may, however, say that owing to a temporary depression in trade a number of the operatives have not full employment; but this is not serious, nor is it causing distress.

2. The distress (on account of the weather) is being met by a public relief committee, of which I am chairman. During the week ended Saturday, 16th February, we relieved (out of a population of 27,000) about 90 cases (some of which represented families, others single men) by giving tickets for provisions. A considerable percentage of this number hailed from a large model lodging-house in the borough, and are therefore no part of the permanent resident population.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make. We can meet our own cases without special legislation.

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 18,452. Rateable Value (1892-93), £51,280.

Letter from *C. H. Hardeman*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is some exceptional distress in the town, due to depression in trade, but chiefly due to the severe weather.

2. The Town Council have during the last few weeks employed men in stone-breaking and clearing snow from the streets, and during the four weeks ended 16th instant they have expended the sum of 45*l.* for the purpose. There are several voluntary agencies at work for the relief of the unemployed. The town relief fund is administering relief to over 250 families, and the penny dinner fund relieves about 380 children daily. A quantity of coke has also been distributed.

3. There is no unemployed register kept, as it is thought unnecessary in this borough.

PONTEFRACT MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 9,702. Rateable Value (1892-93), £31,799.

Letter from *G. Grandidge*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress other than that caused by the severe frost.

2. That those affected, some 200 in number, are being relieved twice weekly with groceries and bread according to the number in each family, and once a week with coal. This is being done out of a distress fund opened by me and managed by a representative committee of which I am chairman.

3. There is no register of the unemployed kept.

4. I have no opinion to offer on a subject so vast and intricate.

RAMSGATE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (KENT).

Population (1891), 24,733. Rateable Value (1892–93), £117,389.

Letter from *C. J. Gwyn*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, further than the result of an indifferent summer season. During the past few weeks, however, a pinch has been felt by many, such as bricklayers, carpenters, labourers, &c., owing to the severe frost, which has stopped all outdoor work.

2. No step has been taken by the public authorities, who, after consultation, have not deemed it expedient or necessary. There has been a fair amount of private benevolence at work, and "penny dinners" have been provided for large numbers of children. The soup kitchen, too, and other parochial relief agencies have been in full swing.

3. No employment register is maintained.

4. As a general remark, I should suggest that, wherever practicable, in any really distressed district, useful public works should be started, giving occupation to large numbers of men.

REIGATE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SURREY).

Population (1891), 22,646. Rateable Value (1892-93), £145,179.

Letter from *C. J. Grece*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. EXCEPTIONAL distress prevails in the borough, but solely in consequence of the widespread suspension of outdoor labour through the protracted severity of the weather.

2. Nought is being done by public authorities with the special purpose of obviating the distress; but among voluntary agencies, soup kitchens have been active in relieving distress, and the Central Aid Society has also assisted such cases as are deemed deserving.

3. I know of no register of the unemployed but that kept by the Central Aid Society.

4. So far as this borough goes, the exceptional distress may be expected to come to an end with the break-up of the frost.

RICHMOND MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 4,216. Rateable Value (1892–93), £15,613.

Letter from *C. G. Croft*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is a certain amount of exceptional distress in this borough caused by the severe weather, but up to the date of its commencement there was no reason to anticipate any such distress.

2. Work has been found for the unemployed in clearing the streets of snow, and stone-breaking. No one who applied for it has been refused work. There are also in the town a voluntary coal fund and soup kitchen. I regret that I cannot give the average daily number relieved during the week ended Saturday, 16th February; but if I can get the information, it shall be supplied.

3. No register of unemployed is kept here, as in a town of this size, where the districts are systematically visited by volunteers, very few, if any, cases of distress escape notice.

RYE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (EAST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 3,871. Rateable Value (1892–93), £12,129.

Letter from *W. Dawes*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this borough beyond that caused by the late severe weather.

2. Work has been found by the Surveyor for a considerable number, and soup and bread are distributed to some 250 families twice a week.

3. A register of unemployed has not been kept, the number being too small.

4. The Council have no suggestions to offer.

SAFFRON WALDEN MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 6,104. Rateable Value (1892-93), £23,518.

Letter from *E. Taylor*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is a certain amount of exceptional distress in this borough, caused primarily by severe weather. In the second place, by stagnation in building and allied trades, notably cement-making, also in agriculture. The stagnation is partly due to the severe weather and partly to low prices of agricultural produce, and close competition, which necessitate strict economy of labour on the part of farmers and others.

2. A certain number of extra men have been employed by the Town Council to assist in clearing snow, and other urgent work in the borough, but the extreme severity of the weather has rendered it impossible to find work for most of those out of employ. Soup kitchens have been opened, and supported amply by voluntary contributions, the feeding of children, and men out of work through the weather, being specially attended to. During the week ended 16th February 300 children were fed with soup and bread on three days at the Corn Exchange, while 100 men out of employment received each four half quartern loaves and a beef pudding to take home. They were also supplied on three days in the Corn Exchange with as much soup and dumpling as they could eat. I feel that I am fairly entitled to say, that, owing to the excellent working of various ordinary charitable methods, there has been no known case of distress which has not been promptly and suitably relieved. There are however, it is to be feared, many cases, some even small ratepayers, whose cases are never known, where the "hard times" have pressed very severely, and it is I think generally felt that any relief which told heavily and directly on the rates would but shift the burden to shoulders unable to bear the strain.

3. No register is kept here.

4. Beyond cleansing of streets, none of the suggestions for relief works in the Circular* of 11th February 1895 are applicable during severe weather, nor is there any necessity for such works in this borough at present.

ST. IVES MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (HUNTINGDON).

Population (1891), 3,037. Rateable Value (1892-93), £12,773.

Letter from *C. Stiles*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the borough of St. Ives, Hunts, but what little distress there has been is on account of the severe weather, which threw out a number of men, but that has been met with to a certain extent by many of those going on the ice earning 4*s.* or 5*s.* per day by putting on skates, and others have earned a fair living by selling goods to the skaters. St. Ives is a noted place for skating. Also to meet what little distress remained, I, the Mayor of the Borough, called a public meeting in the Corn Exchange about a month ago, which was well responded to. We then gave a distribution of coal and bread to the poor and needy, about 200; and on the following week coal and bread to about 170. This week on Wednesday was distributed 200 quarts of excellent soup, and to-morrow (Friday) the same quantity will be given away. Our poor are exceedingly well looked after by the Clergy and ministers of all denominations.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

4. I have no further suggestions to make for relieving the distressed, as it is not necessary. A few weeks ago, in addition to the above, was opened a stone-yard; all that liked to apply could obtain work and earn 2*s.* per day. I am happy to inform you the weather is now much milder; the appearance of frost seems to be disappearing. There is an abundance of work that wants doing in all trades as soon as the weather permits.

SCARBOROUGH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 33,776. Rateable Value (1892-93), £182,664.

Letter from *J. T. Graham*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, owing principally to the severe weather, but also existing among persons who are usually out of employment at this time of the year, but who will be in work when the requirements of the Scarborough season again arise.

2. To meet the exceptional distress the Mayor has opened a relief fund, which now amounts to between 400*l.* and 500*l.*, and is being administered by the Charity Organization Society. During the week ended Saturday the 16th February 690 families received help through the Society, and considerable help is also given by private individuals.

3. There is not any unemployed register here, it being considered unnecessary.

4. The carrying out, as soon as the weather permits, and the sanction of the Local Government Board has been received, of some public works which have been determined upon by the Corporation.

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* This Circular letter related to the means that might be adopted for providing, in times of exceptional distress, employment for the unemployed of a class who do not ordinarily have recourse to Boards of Guardians for relief.

SOUTHWOLD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (EAST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 2,311. Rateable Value (1892–93), £11,472.

Letter from *W. C. Tuck*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THE poorer class in the borough is composed chiefly of fishermen, and the severe weather, of course, prevents them carrying on their business, but I cannot say that the distress is exceptional.

To meet any cases soup is given away daily to the extent of about 120 quarts, and coal and clothing is distributed by voluntary agencies. The Corporation give their work to the unemployed as much as possible, and as the weather is now improving, I do not think it necessary that any further steps be taken in the borough.

No register is maintained.

THORNABY-ON-TEES MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 15,637. Rateable Value (1892-93), £46,468.

Letter from *C. A. Head*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is very little exceptional distress in this borough beyond such as is usually caused by severe weather.

2. No public authorities have instituted any system of organised relief; but, so much as appears to have been necessary, has been done by voluntary agency, and no official record is obtainable.

3. An unemployed register has not been maintained, nor has it been commenced in this borough, no occasion having arisen for it.

4. Under the circumstances mentioned, I have no suggestions to make on the subject.

TYNEMOUTH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 46,588. Rateable Value (1892–93), £179,238.

Letter from *G. Armstrong*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is a large amount of distress amongst the poorest class of working men in this borough, almost entirely due to the suspension of out-door industries, in consequence of the severe weather. It is likely to be of short duration, some of the works having already been re-opened.

2. The sanitary authority has given employment to as many men as were required to clear the snow from the streets, and a distress fund, raised by voluntary contributions, is being used to provide free breakfasts, and soup and bread at midday; soup and bread being supplied to about 800 families three days per week, and free breakfasts to about 1,500 children three days per week.

3. No register kept; it would be of no advantage here.

4. No suggestions to make; outside work in the shipyards, dry docks, or on the roads, is impracticable during such weather as we have experienced lately.

WENLOCK MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SALOP).

Population (1891), 15,703. Rateable Value (1892-93), £59,983.

Letter from *A. B. Dyas*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

This borough is somewhat peculiar, and consists of four wards—two of which are Urban and two Rural. In the latter wards (Wenlock and Barrow) there is no distress of any moment, but in the former (Broseley and Madeley) there is. In reply to questions:—

1. THERE is exceptional distress, due to the severe weather amongst the brick and tile manufactures.

2. Voluntary agencies, by distributing bread, cheese, bacon, tea, sugar, soup, and coals, to three to five hundred families.

3. No register is maintained.

4. None at present.

West Hartlepool Municipal Borough (Durham).

Population (1891), 42,710. Rateable Value (1892–93), £165,089.

Letter from *G. Pyman, Jun.*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. There is, undoubtedly, at this time exceptional distress in the district, two-thirds of which it is believed is attributable to the severe weather which has prevailed all through the month of January and up to the end of last week. This has caused a stoppage of work in the shipbuilding yards and the building trade, and in the importation and forwarding inland of timber. This is peculiar to the district in so far as shipbuilding and timber importation are the staple trades of the town. As to the remaining one-third of those in distress, this can be accounted for by general depression in trade, and the dislocation of trade caused by a large strike during last year.

2. The Corporation of West Hartlepool have just opened a stone-yard to relieve 100 men, and 26 have already availed themselves of the work provided. The Charity Organization Society has made a special appeal, and it is estimated that the average number of cases relieved daily is 1,000. There are also certain smaller charitable agencies.

3. An unemployed register has not been maintained, but from statistics obtained from the trade societies and employers of labour in the district, it is believed that there are at present about 1,800 able-bodied men out of work, about one-third of whom are skilled artizans in receipt of an allowance from the trade societies.

4. In this district, provided the Government should think proper to make a grant out of public moneys, a large amount of labour could be most usefully employed in levelling the land and constructing a sea wall between West Hartlepool and the suburb of Seaton Carew, about a mile in length along an exposed part of the coast, where the sea is gradually encroaching. This expense is one that the local authority do not feel justified in undertaking out of the rates, but from a public point of view the work is most desirable and important.

Winchester Municipal Borough (Southampton).

Population (1891), 19,073. Rateable Value (1892–93), £91,435.

Letter from *W. T. Warren*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. The exceptional distress in this city arises solely from the severity of the weather, which has occasioned a suspension of out-of-door work. The Mayor has opened a relief fund, and much has been done by voluntary aid.

2. The Town Council have commenced to lay out a pleasure ground. They have also employed a number of men in maintaining coke fires in the streets over the fire-plugs, in order to obtain a supply of water in case of fire; and also to ensure a supply of water by stand-pipes. This has supplied work to upwards of 60 men for the week ended 16th February.

3. There is no formal register kept of the unemployed, but a book has been opened at the Guildhall for entering the names of persons out of employ and in distress. In this city all has been done by the authorities and by private individuals in finding employment during the temporary distress which now exists.

Wrexham Municipal Borough (Denbigh).

Population (1891), 12,552. Rateable Value (1892–93), £47,173.

Letter from *T. Bury*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is no doubt considerable exceptional distress of a temporary kind among the labouring classes in this Urban District, due mainly to the severe weather, but partly owing to the recent completion of the making of the Wrexham and Ellesmere Railway, depriving a good many men of employment.

2. The Mayor has opened a fund for the relief of the distressed, and during the week ended Saturday, 16th February, 2,000 tickets of the value of 4*d.* each, available for bread or coal, were twice distributed to about 800 persons; and also 500 tickets for 1 cwt. of cobble slack each.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained, but the distributors enter a note of the persons relieved and the reason.

4. The Mayor has no suggestion to make for relief beyond the present local arrangements. The public authority have no works that can at present be put forward for giving employment to men beyond the considerable staff already employed by the Corporation. I may add that the Mayor's fund has been on foot since the 11th ultimo, and two distributions per week have taken place since then, besides numerous private gifts of bread, and soup kitchens have been at work throughout the frost.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Altofts Urban District (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 3,791. Assessable Value (1892–93), £20,606.

Letter from *H. Mason*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

There is no exceptional distress in the district, and such distress or poverty as does exist is being, and can be, satisfactorily dealt with by the usual methods.

It is not considered necessary to establish any register of unemployed persons, or to make any suggestions with regard to the relief of distress.

Ashbourne Urban District (Derby).

Population (1891), 3,809. Assessable Value (1892–93), £9,821.

Letter from *J. Osborne*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. There is doubtless some distress in this district, owing to the fact of many being out of employment in consequence of the severe and protracted frost, which renders it impossible to carry on certain kinds of work. At the same time I do not regard the distress as exceptional for this time of year. The ordinary trade of the district is as good as usual, and there is no distress due to circumstances peculiar to the locality. I understand that most have work to go to as soon as the weather will allow.

2. I brought this question before the Urban District Council at our last meeting on the 12th instant, and it was then thought that the ordinary relief committee was quite able to do all that was necessary. The relief committee is appointed by the trustees of the grammar school, and meets every year to distribute coal from a small charity for that purpose. This year, in consequence of the continuation of the severe weather, subscriptions have been asked for, and the fund has been considerably augmented. This committee has been able to distribute to 440 families 3 cwt. of coal each ; some very needy families have had a second 3 cwt. given them. It has also given away 863 4-lb. loaves of bread. In view of a second distribution of coal and bread, we have divided the town into four parts, and appointed two members of the committee to each part. These gentlemen have undertaken to make a systematic inquiry, find out any cases of distress, and report to a committee meeting to-morrow (Thursday) night. In this way we hope to get a list of all those who are really in need, and their wants will be met as far as possible. In Compton, which was a part of the old parish of Clifton, another charity has distributed 5 cwt. of coal to every poor family. Commencing with Sunday, 10th February, free breakfasts, consisting of hot coffee, bread and butter, and a bun, have been given at the Wesleyan Mission Room, Compton, every Sunday, Tuesday, and Friday mornings to about 250 poor children, the exact number yesterday being 248. Admission has been by ticket, and the great desire of the promoters is to provide a good, warm, comfortable breakfast to the poorest children, irrespective of creed. Ladies and gentlemen of all denominations have assisted most liberally in this good work. Up to the present five of these free breakfasts have been given, and five more are promised. There is a great deal of private charity ; many people are distributing soup and grocery tickets to those who need. The Guardians are also relieving a large number of cases during the continuance of the frost.

3. A register of the unemployed is not kept.

4. Any unusual distress in this district is entirely due to the severity of the weather, and will be relieved as soon as the cause is removed.

Ashby-de-la-Zouch Urban District (Leicester).

Population (1891), 4,535. Assessable Value (1892–93), £16,198.

Letter from *J. German*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. There is no special distress, except that arising from the severe weather having thrown mechanics out of employment.

2. The matter did not appear large enough to be taken up by the public authorities. Collections were made, amounting to from 70*l.* to 80*l.*, a considerable part of which is being distributed by the district visitors, thus embracing the whole town. The collection was made on 11th February.

3. Unemployed register not necessary.

4. When the frost is over there will be no special distress in the town.

Ashby Woulds Urban District (Leicester).

Population (1891), 3,214. Assessable Value (1892-93), £10,741.

Letter from *J. Hassall*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

On account of the number of collieries and earthenware manufactories in the neighbourhood there is no exceptional distress in this district.

Aspull Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 8,952. Assessable Value (1892–93), £21,210.

Letter from *W. H. Hewlett*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. The unanimous opinion of the Council was that there is no distress in the Aspull district of what might be termed an aggravated or exceptional nature ; that there is some distress is no doubt the case, but that this has been brought about more by the short time occasioned by the bad trade in the industries in which the people in the Aspull district are engaged, than by the people being thrown out of employment altogether. Naturally, the smaller wages earned, and the consequently lessened buying power, has been more severely felt in consequence of the exceptionally severe weather through which we have recently passed.

2. There is no public fund for relief, and nothing beyond the usual channels of assistance.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

Audley Urban District (Stafford).

Population (1891), 12,631. Assessable Value (1892–93), £37,862.

Letter from *John J. Nelson*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress existing in the district owing to the recent inundation of the Diglake Colliery, which resulted in the loss of 77 lives.

2. Nothing has been done to meet the distress by public authorities, but numerous committees have been formed with the object of collecting subscriptions for the benefit of the families of the deceased men ; over 12,000*l.* has already been raised, and part of this money is used for the purpose of affording immediate relief. I cannot state the average daily number relieved by each of these agencies.

3. No register of unemployed is maintained.

4. My Council have no suggestions to make, as the distress arises from exceptional causes, and the funds which have already been collected are sufficient to afford relief to all persons requiring assistance.
There is no distress in any other part of the district.

Bakewell Urban District (Derby).

Population (1891), 2,748. Assessable Value (1892–93), £9,725.

Letter from *F. J. Taylor*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress. It is due mainly to the severe weather, and in a less degree to slackness of trade, but the exceptional distress is only a small part of the whole, the remainder being chronic, and due to habits of intemperance and want of thrift.

2. The distress as a whole is being met by the voluntary agency of a committee appointed by a town meeting, and consisting of the Ministers of Religion and some dozen other householders, and administering a fund provided by public subscription, and individual action is discouraged. Nothing has been done by any public authority ; breakfast is provided for all the children attending the free schools, and soup given to all poor people who apply for it, once a day (a pint to a man). The number of children receiving breakfasts is about 100, the number of families receiving soup daily is about 100 ; the committee sit twice a week to go through their list of persons out of work, and

dispense coal and provisions. The number of families so relieved was about 110 during the week ended 16th February; the free breakfasts did not begin until after the 16th.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

4. The exceptional distress will right itself with the removal of the cause. The chronic distress will probably continue until habitual drunkards are treated by the State as irresponsible persons, and they and their families are housed and fed in return for their enforced labour. Relief in the form of money is not recommended, and this is an objection to relief works.

BALDOCK URBAN DISTRICT (HERTFORD).

Population (1891), 2,301. Assessable Value (1892-93), £6,529.

Letter from *C. J. Veasey*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

BAMPTON URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 1,672. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. E. Holland*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THE distress in this district, which is mainly an agricultural one, arises from the severe weather, and is only exceptional in the sense that the long-continued frost is exceptional. Those out of work are, speaking generally, of the class and occupations that are always thrown out of work by frost, and, of course, the longer the frost lasts the more pinched they are. This class, however, is not a large proportion of the population, the great majority being engaged in agriculture and fairly well employed.

2. No special measures of relief are being taken by the public authorities. There are several endowed charities in the place. There is a soup and coal fund, besides the usual charities connected with the church. Number relieved by Vicar in week ended 16th February, 20, in meat and groceries; by Soup and Coal Fund 80; half-hundredweight of coal, and 24 gallons of soup, at 1*d.* a quart.

3. There is no register of the unemployed.

4. I do not think any special or emergency measures are necessary. My personal opinion is there would be some advantage in an organisation of the charities in the district, and I think if this was done that all distress which should be relieved would be relieved.

I should add that as the circular is marked urgent, it has not been considered by the Council, and that body is not therefore responsible for any part of this reply.

BARMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT (MERIONETH).

Population (1891), 2,045. Assessable Value (1892-93), £7,571.

Letter from *Rev. G. Davies*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is a deal of exceptional distress in the district, due (*a*) To the bad season the lodging-house keepers experienced last summer; (*b*) All building operations have been at a standstill for many weeks owing to the severity of the weather.

2. The distress is partly met by (*a*) Agencies in connection with the various Nonconformist chapels in the place; (*b*) A strong general committee has been formed, and sums of money collected and distributed so as to meet the most pressing cases.

So far, the Urban Council has not been able to do much, but at our meeting on Tuesday last it was decided to proceed at once with a certain work, viz., the widening of one of the streets, which at present is dangerous. A resident landowner has given sufficient land free of charge; the total cost will be about 200*l.*, which will fall upon the County Council and the Urban Council. This will give employment for some 30 or 40 of the Barmouth stonemasons and labourers. We have ventured to proceed with the work at once, trusting that when we come to the Local Government Board for powers to raise the 200*l.*, no obstacles will be thrown in our way.

Some months ago it was decided by the Local Board of Barmouth to build a bridge over the railway, and do away with a certain crossing, which is dangerous; the bridge will cost some 400*l.*, and with the permission of the Local Government Board perhaps we might proceed with the work without waiting for an inquiry.

3. No register kept; we know all the unemployed.

4 Only those given above, viz., the widening of the road and the erection of the bridge.

I only refer here to Barmouth. The distress is felt keenly by the miners at Bontddu, some five miles from Barmouth.

Beckenham Urban District (Kent).

Population (1891), 20,707. Assessable Value (1892–93), £170,584.

Letter from *F. Stevens*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this district at the present time, but the same is not due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, but entirely to the severe weather.

2. The public authorities which have taken action are principally the Guardians, and to a lesser extent the District Council. The former have opened a labour yard, where any parishioner in distress can receive out-door relief according to the enclosed scale. The test of diligence applied is the sawing, chopping, and bundling of firewood. The average number relieved in this manner during the week ending 16th February, was 98. The relieving officer reports that other out-door relief does not exceed the average for the rest of the year. The District Council provided sewer work for 30 men, but that had to be discharged, because the material thrown from the trenches was frozen so hard that it could not be rammed on its return to the trenches, and if proceeded with there would have been great danger to traffic owing to subsequent subsidence. On each occasion of the fall of snow from 50 to 100 men were employed daily in sweeping footpaths and clearing channels. There were no men for the week referred to in the Council's employ on either work. There are no voluntary agencies in this district, beyond the various Church organizations and the Beckenham Charitable Society. The district visitors were instructed during the distress to give help more liberally than usual, and the Charitable Society made a grant of 8*d.* per day to married men, and 3*d.* per day to single men, employed in the labour yard. In addition, the men are provided with a simple meal in the middle of the day.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained in this district.

4. The Circular * of the Local Government Board, dated the 11th day of February on this subject, was considered by the District Council at their meeting held on Monday last, when the enclosed letter from the rector of Beckenham was submitted. I was instructed to say, that in the opinion of this Council the best means of meeting the exceptional distress which may be said to occur in this district only in times of frost, is in the provision of a labour yard for wood chopping, as now managed by the Guardians, but I am instructed to very earnestly impress on the Local Government Board the advisability of legislation, which shall relieve this kind of employment from the penalties of pauperism. Without question the very objectionable system of making collections by street processions (the proceeds of which are usually divided at a public-house and a great deal of it spent there), are rendered possible by the plea that the labour yard pauperises. If this taint could be removed, the inhabitants would refuse to give to street processions, knowing that the men could, without any disability, obtain necessary sustenance by working in the labour yard. The Council trust that the Local Government Board will see their way to recommend to Parliament an amendment of the Poor Law in the direction suggested.

(Scale for Labour Yard above referred to.)

January 1895.

Married Man.	Wife.	Number of Children.	Money.	Kind.
			d.	*s.* *d.*
Man	Wife	None	6	– 9
Man	Wife	One child	6	1 –
Man	Wife	Two children	6	1 3
Man	Wife	Three children and upwards	6	1 6

Single men, 9*d.* per day in kind.

(Letter above referred to.)

Dear Sir, The Rectory, Beckenham, Kent, 19 February 1895.

In view of the difficulty of providing work for the unemployed during times like the present, it seems a grievous hardship that when a Union like ours is willing to take such prompt steps to open a labour yard and provide work any man can do, those who avail themselves of it should suffer the disability attending the reception of the poor law relief.

It is an anomaly, surely unworthy of the times, that men out of work through no fault of their own, may loaf through the streets in gangs begging from door to door, without any loss than the wounded self-respect which must attend such demonstrations, while men too proud to beg and quite willing to accept even the scantily paid work offered by the labour yard, should lose their franchise and share the stigma of pauperism for so doing.

I would venture to suggest that it may strengthen the hands of the Government if a petition were sent up by the Beckenham District Council praying for the speedy passage of a short Act removing the disability mentioned, and if other district councils could be induced to take a similar step, it is almost certain that both sides of the House would gladly concur in passing so just and expedient a measure.

I am quite sure from the kindness you have personally shown in helping those who use the labour yard, that this will meet with your support, and if you will kindly bring it formally before the Council, I shall be much obliged.

F. Stevens, Esq.

I am, &c.
Henry Arnott.

* See note * on page 87.

Belper Urban District (Derby).

Population (1891), 10,420. Assessable Value (1892–93), £23,565.

Letter from *J. Pym*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is some slight exceptional distress amongst bricklayers, masons, their labourers and railway men, consequent on the frost entirely.

2. Voluntary help has been provided, and each case properly inquired into and relieved.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. As far as I can state, we have funds in hand to properly deal with deserving cases. Idleness and drunkenness are frequently causes of being unemployed, and this class cry out the loudest and are the least deserving.

Blackrod Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 4,021. Assessable Value (1892–93), £12,477.

Letter from *J. Eckersley*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

There is no exceptional distress in this district. There has, no doubt, been some distress amongst the people in the township, as they are principally employed in coal mining, and none of them have had more than three or four days' employment, but there is no exceptional distress, and no exceptional measures have been taken to afford relief.

Bollington Urban District (Chester).

Population (1891), 3,913. Assessable Value (1892–93), £10,607.

Letter from *G. Swindells*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress. This is partly due to the stoppage of a cotton factory, whereby about 36 heads of families and other members have been thrown out of work; and partly owing to the very severe weather, which has stopped out-door labour, especially in the numerous stone quarries in the district and neighbourhood.

2. The District Council find work on the road and in stone-breaking for many, turn and turn about, whenever they can. The wages earned are supplemented out of a relief fund, which has been well supported; there has been, and is, a good deal of private charity besides. No family has been without coal during the terrible cold. The Relief Committee gives tickets for provisions and coal; private individuals give soup, milk; dinners once or oftener a week; blankets are also given privately. The number of families relieved is 100.

3. No register of unemployed is kept.

4. Our difficulty will be with the so-called "cotton hands." The others will resume their customary work when the frost has gone. As to the "cotton hands," we contemplate making a new street, and so finding employment for many of them during the summer, but we shall be at a loss what to do with them, and for them, next winter.

Bonsall Urban District (Derby).

Population (1891), 1,329. Assessable Value (1892–93), £2,323.

Letter from *J. Wright*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in the district. Severe weather cause of about 30 men being unemployed.

2. The Council has employed six men for one week snow cutting. Voluntary agencies have met the distress as mentioned below; no average kept.

	£.	s.	d.
Mrs. Prince, The Study, in coal	20	–	–
The Conservative and Unionist Association, in provisions	10	15	–
The Baptist Society and friends	2	10	–
Other friends, in provisions	7	–	–

I may also add that I think they have been fairly well provided for by public benevolence in the shape of bread, soup, groceries, and coal, by private individuals up to the present time, and I believe more is in preparation for the latter end of this week.

3. No unemployed register maintained.

4. Would suggest County Council find funds for this District Council to employ unemployed.

BRIERFIELD URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 5,888. Assessable Value (1892-93), £16,819.

Letter from *R. Procter*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district. There is, no doubt, an increase over the average rate of distress consequent on the severe weather, and the fact that about 600 looms (being say one-tenth of the number of looms in the district), are stopped by reason of the present depression in the cotton trade.

2. The increase in the distress referred to in the previous answer is being effectually dealt with by the heads of the various religious bodies in the district, supplemented by a body of ladies who attend to any cases which do not come under the cognizance of the religious bodies. The total number of cases dealt with by such ladies during the week ended 16th February was 37. The Chairman of the Council is unable to give the number dealt with by the religious bodies, but it is estimated that the number (37) would not be doubled. The District Council have formed a committee, with the object of dealing with any marked addition to the present distress, and no difficulty is anticipated in dealing with any such increase. Free meals daily to the children and females is a course which commends itself most to the authorities.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The answers Nos. 1 and 2 show clearly the position of affairs in this district, and the remedies taken and about to be taken to relieve any present or prospective distress therein, and as there is not anything exceptional in our case we have no suggestions to offer.

BRIERLEY HILL URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 11,847. Assessable Value (1892-93), £27,082.

Letter from *J. Fisher*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. BY reason of the present bad state of trade and the severe weather recently experienced there is exceptional distress prevailing in this district.

2. A relief committee has been formed and with the aid of voluntary donations and gifts, relief is given daily to such as urgently need it, but the committee fear that their funds cannot be kept up to the amount they are at present in receipt of, and therefore will not be able to give such relief as they would wish. During the past week ended Friday, 15th February, 200 children and 100 adults have been daily supplied with dinners, and on Friday morning last 340 children and 53 adults were served with breakfast.

3. An unemployed register is kept, but not much result is obtained thereby.

4. As the present aid received from local contributions cannot be maintained, I can only suggest the payment of a sum from Parliament to aid the relieving of such distress.

BRITON FERRY URBAN DISTRICT (GLAMORGAN).

Population (1891), 5,778. Assessable Value (1892-93), £9,765.

Letter from *J. Kempthorne*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. OWING to the nature of the employment of the working classes in this district (viz., in iron, steel, and tin works, which are all in full work), there is very little distress here.

2. The Council are picking up and relaying a length of sewer pipes which gives employment to about 20 extra men. This work will occupy about three weeks. The men on this job will be able to return to their ordinary employment when the frost breaks up.

3. It has not been found necessary to keep an unemployed register.

4. As stated above the district is singularly free from distress.

Bromsgrove Urban District (Worcester).

Population (1891), 7,934. Assessable Value (1892–93), £13,811.

Letter from *B. H. Sanders*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this district owing to the severe weather, the farm labourers, gardeners, bricklayers and others being thrown entirely out of employ.

2. The Urban District Council have been distributing relief in the shape of bread, soup, and coals, the fund for payment of which is raised by voluntary subscription. During the week ended 16th February, the distributions from this fund were as follows :

550 4lb. loaves on Wednesday, 13th February.
600 4lb. loaves on Friday, 15th February.
100 gallons of soup on Friday, 15th February.
15 tons of coal on Saturday, 16th February.

The ministers, &c., of the various places of worship are also doing what they can.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

Broughton Urban District (Parts of Lindsey).

Population (1891), 1,257. Assessable Value (1892–93), £7,173.

Letter from *G. Spilman*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

Have been making every possible inquiry, and am pleased to find that there is scarcely a case of distress from want of employment in the whole of this district.

I will, however, endeavour to answer your questions as they are put—

1. There is no exceptional distress.

2. Where there is a case of distress it is looked after by charitably disposed persons, and I cannot find a case from any cause whatever but is being seen to.

3. No unemployed register maintained.

4. I think from what I have already said you will consider this question sufficiently answered.

I may say that about half the people in this urban district derive their living from mining ironstone ; this industry through the severe weather has never been stopped, so they are well off. The remainder are engaged in agriculture, and the farmers, though hit hard by low prices, are endeavouring to keep their labourers employed during this winter.

Buxton Urban District (Derby).

Population (1891), 7,540. Assessable Value (1892–93), £54,969.

Letter from *G. F. Barnard*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. There has been exceptional distress among the out-door working classes in this district, due entirely to the severe weather for the last eight weeks, all ordinary out-door work having been suspended.

2. Stone has been carted to the town's yard, where many men have been employed hand stone-breaking, who would otherwise have had nothing to do. Our own men have been employed principally in removing snow from the streets, and distributing water from hydrants and water-carts, making 42 hours a week, instead of their usual 54½ hours. In some streets the water service pipes are frozen up. Soup kitchens have been opened, and soup, bacon, and bread have been supplied by public subscription to 170 families daily.

3. No register is kept of the unemployed.

4. The distress will soon disappear in this district ; when ordinary out-door work is possible there is plenty of employment. The distress in Buxton is only of a temporary character.

CAERLEON URBAN DISTRICT (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 1,411. Assessable Value (1892–93), £3,345.

Letter from *T. R. P. Herbert*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is a certain amount of exceptional distress in the district of this Council, but it is almost wholly due to the severe weather.

2. Voluntary agencies are now working in the district, and for the week ended Saturday, the 16th instant, upwards of 60 persons received assistance by means of "tickets," and, in addition to these, a large number received a daily supply of soup from a voluntary source. On Friday next there will be a further distribution of tickets from the voluntary agency, whose funds will, it is thought, be sufficient to meet all immediate needs.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. No suggestions to make.

CALVERLEY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,525. Assessable Value (1892–93), £11,065.

Letter from *W. Thornton*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional but not severe distress in this district, due to the falling demand for labour in the local trade (the manufacture of woollen cloth), which has been complained of for upwards of two years; the earnings of those engaged in the trade having probably been reduced to the extent of at least two-thirds during the past twelve months. There are, of course, cases where the reduction has been much greater. There has also been an almost total loss of wages for the past seven weeks by those (estimated at 30 families) who are engaged in the building and other out-door trades affected by the frost. The condition of the "regular poor" has also been much aggravated by the long-continued severe weather.

2. Nothing is being done to relieve the distress by public bodies. A number of cases, most of which consist of the "regular poor," are being relieved by private individuals, and, to some extent, by charitable agencies connected with the religious bodies in the village. No record of such relief is kept. Probably, from 40 to 50 families, out of about 500, have had relief to some extent.

3. There is no unemployed register.

4. As to the distress in this locality, the coming of open weather will at once greatly reduce the need of relief. The want of work in connection with the local trade appears to be similar to that which is being experienced in all industrial districts, and there does not seem to be any measures within the scope of the powers of local authorities, available in this locality, for increasing the amount of employment for the working classes.

CARLTON URBAN DISTRICT (NOTTINGHAM).

Population (1891), 6,627. Assessable Value (1892–93), £13,278.

Letter from *J. K. Clark*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE has been exceptional distress in the district, caused through the severe weather.

2. Nothing has been done by the public authorities of the district, but it has been met, as far as possible, by private individuals.

3. An unemployed register has not been maintained.

4. The Chairman has no suggestions to make as to the relieving of the distress.

CAVERSHAM URBAN DISTRICT (OXFORD).

Population (1891), 4,966. Assessable Value (1892–93), £15,608.

Letter from *W. J. Henman*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

THERE is a large amount of distress in this district; but it is entirely owing to the long frost. There will be plenty of work as soon as the weather breaks. We are meeting it by stone-breaking for the men with families, soup kitchens, and free breakfasts to the children of the unemployed attending the schools.

CHEPSTOW URBAN DISTRICT (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 3,378. Assessable Value (1892–93), £10,733.

Letter from *A. G. Lawrence*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is slight distress in this district, owing to the great frost.

2. The Council, to alleviate the distress, have opened stone quarries, finding thereby employment for about 30 men. The Council have also organised a voluntary relief fund, and the average number relieved by this fund for the week ended 16th February was 184.

3. The relief fund committee have instituted an unemployed list or register, with the result that no necessitous cases remain unrelieved in the town.

4. I have no suggestions; everything here is working well, all denominations pulling together without any friction. In addition to the measures my Council have instituted the Vicar of Chepstow has organised, and successfully carried out, daily dinners of hot meat and potatoes, &c., to the poorer children of the district, irrespective of creed or any distinction.

CHESHUNT URBAN DISTRICT (HERTFORD).

Population (1891), 9,620. Assessable Value (1892–93), £31,192.

Letter from *A. C. Lee*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is considerable distress in the district, which seems entirely owing to the severity of the weather, and will probably disappear when the weather breaks.

2. The local authority has considered the question, but was unable to take on any additional labour, as in fact they are already employing men for whom they have no actual need, sooner than dismiss such men during the present period, when employment is difficult to be found. The only agency I am aware of is the Cheshunt Charity Organisation Society. The inquiry officer informs me that the distress has been very exceptional, and that during the week ended Saturday, 16th February, 70 applications for assistance were received by the society from heads of families (representing nearly 300 persons), all of which were granted.

3. I am not aware that an unemployed register is kept.

4. Very shortly the Council will be making a drain for the drainage of their reservoir, which may possibly give employment to a small amount of labour. The amount of the contract, however, is only 350*l*.

CIRENCESTER URBAN DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 7,521. Assessable Value (1892–93), £24,828.

Letter from *R. Ellett*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THERE has not been, so far as can be ascertained, any exceptional distress in this district beyond such as is usual during times of severe frost. The Council have provided for the employment of a limited number of men in the scavenge yards and at stone-breaking, and no further steps have been considered necessary.

The Chairman of the Council is not aware of any unemployed register having been maintained, and it does not appear to the Council necessary for them to offer any suggestions.

CLAYTON-LE-MOORS URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 7,155. Assessable Value (1892–93), £17,163.

Letter from *J. H. Calvert*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

THE distress in this district is mainly due to the severe and prolonged frost, which stops all out-door labour. The earning power of persons employed in cotton mills is somewhat reduced, owing to the bad condition of trade, but this is not causing special distress.

Stone quarrymen and builders' and contractors' workmen have collected funds and distributed same to about 37 persons and 40 children, the former receiving 8*s*. to 10*s*. each per week, and 6*d*. each per week for the latter. A local committee has been formed to collect subscriptions and distribute to all cases of distress. This, we anticipate, will meet all requirements.

CLEVEDON URBAN DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 5,412. Assessable Value (1892-93), £28,655.

Letter from *H. C. Fry*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. The stone quarries belonging to the Council are open, and up to the present work has been found therein for all who have applied. The distress, which usually exists at this time of the year, has been met by the various parochial organizations.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. No suggestions to make.

CONSETT URBAN DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 8,175. Assessable Value (1892-93), £28,142.

Letter from *G. Ainsworth*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is a considerable amount of distress existing at the present time in the town of Consett; but this is wholly due to the exceptional severity of the weather, which has stopped all outdoor operations,—otherwise there is nothing at all of an exceptional character; indeed, owing to the construction of a railway through the district at the present time there is, I should say, less want of employment than is usual at this period of the year.

2. A committee consisting of the principal inhabitants of the town was formed a fortnight ago, who collected subscriptions, which have been freely given, mapped out the town for the purpose of inquiry, and have relieved all cases of distress which have been brought to their notice, the number of families so relieved in the week ended 16th February being about 200. This relief was given in the form of tickets, each ticket representing a certain amount of money which authorised the purchase of provisions at any of the shops in the town to the extent stated on the ticket, and this system is still in operation. The District Council have also employed extra men, the number varying from 12 to 20, in snow-cutting and clearing the streets, arrangements being made by which the work was distributed as much as possible, each man only getting about three days' work per week. In addition two private soup kitchens have been opened, but I have no means of knowing the number of people benefited by them.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. I have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving distress beyond what has been done, and I believe that so soon as the present exceptionally severe weather moderates most, if not all, of the unemployed in Consett will be again at work.

COSELEY URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 21,899. Assessable Value (1892-93), £46,222.

Letter from *R. Clayton*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, which is due to the severe weather, coupled with the great depression in trade and the closing of works.

2. Your former Circular* on this subject was brought before my council at their last sitting, and it was found impracticable to accept any of the suggestions you then made.

3. We have no unemployed register.

4. I have no suggestions to make.

I beg to inform you that, so far as private charity is concerned, I and the Vicars of the district have held a meeting, and have collected monies which have now been expended in the distribution of soup, bread, &c.

If you wish any further information I should be glad if you would place before me sufficient information as will enable me to give any details you require.

In conclusion, I shall bring your letter and my reply before the next Council meeting, which will take place on the first Tuesday in March.

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* See note * on page 87.

COTTINGHAM URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, EAST RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,880. Assessable Value (1892–93), £18,827.

Letter from *J. S. M. Blundell*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THERE is very little exceptional distress in the district, and such distress as there is has been thoroughly coped with by private charity. The only step taken by the Council in the matter was to divide the work of clearing the village streets of snow amongst a small number of men who were out of employment in consequence of the continued frost.

CRAMLINGTON URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 5,967. Assessable Value (1892–93), £17,957.

Letter from *W. R. Willis*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. OUR district is chiefly made up of coal miners, and although the weather has been very severe and the collieries have been working short time, the distress in this district is not widespread; there may be a few families suffering through slackness of trade. The number of days worked per week for the last eight weeks for this district is a little over two and a half days.

2. There has not been any relief from public authorities or by voluntary agencies. But about 500 men have received 4*s.* per man from the Northumberland Miners' Association, as per rule, due when the men only worked three days in a fortnight. The half-members received 2*s.* each. That is the only relief given in this district.

3. We have no register for unemployed in this district.

4. No suggestions to make.

CROSTON URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 2,034. Assessable Value (1892–93), £5,458.

Letter from *J. Ascroft*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

WE have no real distress in our district that requires any action being taken.

DOWNHAM MARKET URBAN DISTRICT (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 2,537. Assessable Value (1892–93), £6,727.

Letter from *Charles Hawkins*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

I DO not think there is any exceptional distress in this district. A great many agricultural labourers are out of employment in consequence of the depression, as the farmers have no money to pay wages with, as corn has not made sufficient in many cases, to pay the out-goings. In our Urban District we have very few, if any, able-bodied men out of employment; there are some who are never in regular work, they prefer to loaf about and get catch work.

The recipients of out-door relief have received 6*d.* per week during the severe weather, in addition to the usual allowance. The 100-acre Common Charity Trustees have distributed in coal 135*l.* to the parishes of Downham, Stow, and Wimbotsham. The soup kitchen has been opened, and about 1,100 quarts of soup and 74 stone of bread have been distributed. The trustees of the Batchcroft Charity have distributed 30*l.* in 2*s.* tickets to the deserving poor of Downham. There has also been a great deal given away by private charity. When the snow fell, those out of work were employed to cart it out of the streets.

There is no register kept of the unemployed.

Dronfield Urban District (Derby).

Population (1891), 3,438. Assessable Value (1892–93), £7,856.

Letter from *G. Jenkinson*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

There is not any exceptional distress in this district. There have not been any applications made either to the office of this Council, or the Relieving Officer for employment or relief in consequence of the severe weather.

Droylsden Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 9,482. Assessable Value (1892–93), £25,448.

Letter from *B. F. Cartwright*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress, only through weather. Mostly outdoor workers.

2. Nothing by public authority, but a little by voluntary agencies; 50 to 80 relieved week ended Saturday 16th February.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The distress will almost be at an end when the weather breaks.

East Grinstead Urban District (East Sussex).

Population (1891), 5,180. Assessable Value (1892–93), £18,122.

Letter from *C. W. P. Crawfurd*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. There is such exceptional distress as may be supposed to exist in a well-to-do district in exceptionally severe weather.

2. Voluntary effort provides an unemployed labour fund well in advance of the season of distress, also weekly distributions of soup, coal, bread, conducted systematically, and with due scrutiny in each case. These public distributions are further subsidized by private doles from St. Margaret's Sisterhood and individual effort. Because we have money in hand we can grapple with an occasion before it gravitates into distress. The public authority (Urban Council) provides spade labour on sewage farm (30 acres). This spade labour is not unremunerative. We get "double spit" instead of plough work, a great benefit to our filtration. Men are also employed in gangs in clearing streets from snow, &c. Voluntary effort (unemployed labour fund) pays one-half wages; public authority (Urban Council) the other half. On these lines 70 men were paid for week ended 16th February last. Rate of pay from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 9*d.*, according to value of man. Total money so spent during present hard weather up to date, 200*l.*

3. No register kept. We are in touch with every family in the district, and know all their circumstances.

4. The present system should be maintained till a better can be invented. The thing works right well.

East Ham Urban District (Essex).

Population (1891), 32,713. Assessable Value (1892–93), £104,599.

Letter from *C. E. Wilson*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is not an abnormal amount of distress in this district, but there are a number of men out of employment principally owing to the severity of the weather.

2. This authority has for some time past been doing its work without the aid of contractors, and have works of sewage, public, and private street improvements in operation, but the severe frost has prevented them from proceeding. The Council have, however, kept the men employed, as far as possible, part of each week, doing anything that could be found for them to do, much of the work being unnecessary. The number of men employed for the week ended 16th February being nearly 200.

3. The names of any men applying for employment are taken down.

4. The cessation of the severe frost would enable the authority to put a number of men in employment upon the works mentioned. In the meantime it is very difficult to know what to do for the best.

ECCLESHILL URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 7,928. Assessable Value (1892–93), £23,171.

Letter from *J. Richardson*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district, but the late severe frost has interfered with out-door work.

2. This Council has employed upon the streets and roads in the district a considerable number of unemployed, and has expended as much money as they reasonably could do. Voluntary agencies have also been at work for the distribution of food by private charities, and political, and other clubs; but it is impossible to say what is the average daily number relieved by such agencies. School children have been provided with dinners or breakfasts at nearly every public school in the district.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. This Council does not see any way of dealing with the question except by means of works of a public character, and greatly regrets that on account of the large public debt, this Council is unable to advise such works being commenced in this district.

ELY URBAN DISTRICT (ISLE OF ELY).

Population (1891), 8,017. Assessable Value (1892–93), £21,537.

Letter from *G. S. Hall*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district. A soup kitchen has been in full operation for the last eight weeks to assist those in need of help.

ENFIELD URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 31,536. Assessable Value (1892–93), £96,818.

Letter from *J. J. Wilson*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. IN this parish there is exceptional distress, almost, if not entirely, due to the severe weather.

2. The District Council during the week ended Saturday the 16th instant found employment in various ways for about 40 men, and, I believe, through voluntary agencies, about 1,000 cases were relieved in some form or another.

3. There is no unemployed register.

4. I have no suggestion to make. As far as this parish is concerned, there is plenty of work to do so soon as the weather will permit of its being done.

EPSOM URBAN DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 8,417. Assessable Value (1892–93), £47,975.

Letter from *H. M. Dorling*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. No cases of exceptional distress have come before the notice of the Council.

2. The Local Government Board Circular* of 11th February has received attention, and instructions been given to the Surveyor to provide employment as far as possible for suitable applicants.

3 No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make under present circumstances.

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* See note * on page 87.

FAILSWORTH URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 10,425. Assessable Value (1892–93), £36,448.

Letter from *J. Wild*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress within our district.

2. There is no agency except voluntary on the part of the unemployed, who number about 30 or 40 of outdoor workpeople.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

4. I have no suggestion to make, as the present condition of things is only temporary, owing to the severity of the weather.

FLEETWOOD URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 9,274. Assessable Value (1892–93), £38,232.

Letter from *A. Davies*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

IN this district there is at the present time exceptional distress amongst the labouring classes and persons employed in the fishing industry and building trades. The distress has been largely increased during the last few weeks by the severe weather, and the continuance of the strong winds, which have prevented the fishing boats leaving the harbour, and damaged the boats in those cases where they have been out at sea. The months of December, January, and February usually find the shipping trade of this port at its lowest point, but during the last few weeks the labourers on the wharves, dock, and quays have been altogether out of work. The building trade was fairly brisk until the severe frost arrived. After careful investigation, I am of opinion that the present distress will be greatly relieved when the frost is gone, and the boats employed in the coasting and fishing trades are able to return to their usual work. On the 15th instant I convened a public meeting of residents and others to consider the question of relief for the unemployed, and a very hearty response was given to my invitation. A subscription list was opened at the meeting, and this list has received very hearty support from all classes. The town was divided into four districts, and a soup kitchen established in each district. Committees for each district have visited every cottage house in the town, and valuable help has been given to these committees by the ministers, police, and those persons who are in the habit of visiting the houses of the working classes from week to week. The number of persons supplied with food, coal, &c., during the last few days is over 1,000 per day, including children. This morning a special breakfast was given at eight o'clock to the children of the unemployed, and the same was a great success. No register of the unemployed has been opened in this district, and I am not aware of any request for same. The only suggestion which I can make is, that in each town and district where workmen are liable to be thrown out of employment in the winter months special committees should be formed before the winter arrives, and complete arrangements made for rendering assistance if the same is required. I cannot too highly recommend that the chief officers of police should in all these cases be joined to the committees, as the assistance which can be rendered by them is invaluable for preventing imposition, and for reporting distress. The agents connected with the various industrial assurance societies are also very useful members of a relief committee, as their weekly visits to the houses of the working classes enable them to obtain information as to the actual need of assistance by those persons to whom the relieving officer of the poor law union is unknown.

FLOCKTON URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 1,213. Assessable Value (1892-93), £2,244.

Letter from *E. Beaumont*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. SOME distress in our village that might be described as exceptional; being caused by the closing of the two principal collieries in the district, and not by the severe weather.

2. Nothing has been done beyond the temporary relief afforded by the generosity of a few individuals, and the giving employment to one or two persons by the Council in throwing ashes on the roads; but I am glad to say that the Council, in conjunction with the Vicar of the parish and one or two other gentlemen, are organising a relief fund, by which means we are hoping to tide over the present difficulty. When the weather breaks we shall be able to give employment to a number of men in clearing and repairing the roads.

3. No register of the unemployed has been kept.

4. I have no suggestion of my own to make, but a suggestion has been thrown out: that if a light railway were made, and so open out the district, it would be the means of re-starting the above collieries, and would be a great boon to the district.

FRIERN BARNET URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 9,173. Assessable Value (1892-93), £ 41,925.

Letter from *E. Goodship*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. EXCEPTIONAL distress exists in this district, and is due to the severe weather.

2. The local authority has engaged the services of about 30 men in clearing snow, and, when possible, digging at the farm, and have expended about 40*l.* in this respect. About 140 children are now being fed each morning by voluntary agencies, and during the week ended Saturday the 16th February the average attendance amounted to the same number. In addition thereto, the relief committee for Friern Barnet and New Southgate are distributing about 25*l.* per week in food and fuel.

3. A register of all applicants is maintained at the Council, and about 50 persons have applied for work.

4. The Chairman has not instructed me to make any reply to Query No. 4, but I may say that if a grant could be made out of the Imperial Exchequer to the Council, the Council could render still further assistance to those who are at present in distress from want of employment.

GORTON URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 15,215. Assessable Value (1892-93), £ 34,808.

Letter from *R. T. Holland*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, due to the large iron works being very short of work, and accentuated through the weather, as out-door men cannot be employed.

2. My Council are employing extra men by putting different gangs on every other day; voluntary, there is a soup kitchen opened, and bread and coal distributed at the town's offices.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. I have no suggestions to make beyond what we are at present doing.

GREAT CLACTON URBAN DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 3,584. Assessable Value (1892-93), £ 15,541.

Letter from *A. R. Chamberlayne*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THE distress in the district is generally from no lack of employment, except that which is owing to the severe weather.

2. During the week ended Saturday 16th February 98 cases were relieved by voluntary agency.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. Your Board have had before you some time an application requesting your Board to sanction the sum of 6,096*l.* 6*s.* for making up new streets, and on receipt of this sanction works would be proceeded with which would, no doubt, give employment to a great many in the district.

GREAT CROSBY URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 6,503. Assessable Value (1892-93), £ 35,900.

Letter from *J. Dean*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THERE is not any exceptional distress in the district, except in a small degree, caused through the severity of the weather. This, however, is being fully met by the additional relief afforded by the poor law authorities and the local benefactions. There is no register maintained. The Council are of opinion that nothing has so far arisen in the district as to render it necessary to make any effort beyond what is already being done, and which it is considered fully meets the circumstances. I may mention that in the district of Great Crosby the poor are comparatively few in number, it being to a large extent a residential district.

Hadleigh Urban District (West Suffolk).

Population (1891), 3,224. Assessable Value (1892–93), £7,802.

Letter from *R. H. Cook*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. The distress now prevailing in this district is considerably in excess of that existing at any previous period known to the writer, who has resided in the parish upwards of 50 years. The distress is chiefly due to the general extreme depression of the agricultural industry. The cultivation of over 700 acres of land in this parish has also been given up recently, and not a soul is at present employed upon this large holding. The severe weather has been an aggravating cause.

2. Relief works (stone raising) were commenced by the Urban Council in various directions, but have had to be abandoned in consequence of the severity of the weather. Private offer of wood stubbing had to be abandoned from same cause. A voluntary committee has opened a soup kitchen, supplying 180 families three times a week. This committee has also made a distribution of tickets for food and coal varying from 2*s* to 7*s*. in value to each of from 40 to 50 families, and hope to repeat this distribution. These figures are the figures for the week ended 16th February 1895.

3. No complete register has been made, but it is computed that from 80 to 100, including young men, are out of employment, out of a population of a little over 3,000. Our committee was only able to undertake the relief of those maintaining homes, which would have to have been broken up prior to the obtaining of Poor Law relief.

4. Temporary relief: The Poor Law Guardians should have discretion to grant, for short and limited periods, in times of exceptional distress, to able-bodied men, who are industrious, out-of-doors relief, which would not entail the stigma of pauperism. Permanent measures: Parliament should pass such measures for the relief of agricultural burdens as will enable the English producer to compete on equal terms with the occupiers of untaxed lands elsewhere.

Hardingstone Urban District (Northampton).

Population (1891), 6,341. Assessable Value (1892–93), £14,409.

Letter from *R. Attenborough*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. There cannot be said to be any exceptional distress in this district; there are a few old men and irregulars out of work, but that is generally the case at this time of year; there was no increase in the number of applicants for relief at our Board Meeting on the 11th instant.

2. No extraordinary measures of relief are being taken in this district, but we are very near to Northampton, where considerable efforts are being made for the relief of the unemployed, and a few of our "ne'er do weels" may drift into the town.

3. No unemployed register is kept, as it would be quite useless in our rural parishes.

4. I have no suggestions to make, owing to the backwardness of farming operations. I think every man willing to work will be able to get employment as soon as the severe weather breaks up.

Havant Urban District (Southampton).

Population (1891), 3,474. Assessable Value (1892–93), £11,135.

Letter from *E. R. Longcroft*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There has been exceptional distress in the district consequent upon the severe weather.

2. Steps have been taken to provide work for persons seeking employment, the number employed during the week ended Saturday the 16th instant being about 30.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. So far, the Council are in a position to find sufficient work for applicants seeking employment, and are taking steps to meet any applications which from time to time are likely to be made to them.

Hay Urban District (Brecknock).

Population (1891), 1,830. Assessable Value (1892–93), £5,039.

Letter from *T. S. H. Hincks*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress, which is due to severity of weather only.

2. The distress being due to above cause only, is being met chiefly by local benevolent aid under charge of a relief committee, who provide soup, groceries, coal, and in some cases, blankets and clothing to urgent cases of distress. Very little extra has been asked from any public authority. This is a purely agricultural neighbourhood. Work has been found for those who apply, clearing snow, &c., and paid for partly by relief committees out of benevolent fund, partly from the rates.

3. No unemployed register has been maintained.

4. I have no further suggestions to make. Distress being due to severe weather alone, will abate in time.

Holmfirth Urban District (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 10,318. Assessable Value (1892–93), £24,516.

Letter from *H. Lomax*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. It is believed that there is scarcely any exceptional distress in this district due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, apart from the prevailing slackness of the industrial trades at this season; but the present severe weather has caused exceptional distress amongst labourers in all branches of the building trades.

2. Many voluntary agencies in different parts of the district have continually supplied the needs of those in distress by the distribution of food, fuel, &c., and the daily average number altogether so relieved during the week ended 16th February would be above 200.

3. No unemployed register is maintained or needed.

4. The voluntary means above referred to will, it is believed, suffice to relieve the distress until the end of the present severe weather.

Honley Urban District (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 5,466. Assessable Value (1892–93), £15,884.

Letter from *T. Smailes*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. I have made careful inquiries from Overseers of the Poor, Assistant Overseers, private individuals engaged in distributing relief and others, and the conclusion I have arrived at is, that there is no exceptional amount of distress in this district; there is not the full employment in the woollen mills which usually obtains, and many have to exercise care to make ends meet; this, I take it, is due to the general depression of trade which has existed so long. There is some privation amongst out-door workers due to the severe weather.

2. Relief is being given by voluntary agencies to known necessitous cases; mostly by private individuals, the "Working Men's Club" relieved 33 cases during the week ended 16th February, and do not consider that they have more than 40 cases in their district which require relief; funds subscribed by friends are entrusted to their care for distribution. The District Council employed a few extra men to assist in clearing snow from thoroughfares when the storm began, but owing to the prolonged frost, at present, they are not able to find out-door work for all their regular staff of labourers, much less assist others. When weather permits some work is found by the District Council for unemployed, in getting stone from quarries, and in breaking it; this is about the only work we are able to put in their way.

3. The working Surveyor (of roads) keeps a list of such as apply for work and endeavours to find work for the applicants in rotation, but this is intermitted and only admits of small amounts of relief to each.

4. Suggestions: I consider the distress is met by private liberality, and do not see how the public authority can assist, unless it be by acting in conjunction with the Board of Guardians.

IDLE URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 7,118. Assessable Value (1892–93), £21,059.

Letter from *C. Margatroyd*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress to the extent of 600 persons being dependent on charity for the means of existence; 500 of these are out of work or dependent on those out of work through the frost, the stone quarries furnishing employment to 200 men.

2. The distress is being met by voluntary effort, by the distribution of groceries, coal, coke, &c., to heads of families. The average relieved daily for the week ended 16th February was 26 families per day.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

4. I think much could be done by the construction of light railways, and other works, which would open up new districts, give facilities for the carriage of farm produce to industrial centres, and during construction would materially relieve the towns and villages of a class of persons unskilled in trades, and whose only chance of making a livelihood, would be in doing that class of work.

ILKLEY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 5,767. Assessable Value (1892-93), £31,975.

Letter from *M. Hainsworth*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. This Council have done nothing beyond providing employment for those temporarily out of work in the cleansing and scavenging of streets. Any relief that is necessary has been taken over and attended to by the various religious bodies, who have in this district a great number of wealthy sympathisers to aid their efforts.

3. No unemployed register has been kept or required.

4. Under these circumstances, we have not had sufficient experience to offer any suggestions to your Honourable Board upon the matter.

KIDSGROVE URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 3,841. Assessable Value (1892–93), £9,349.

Letter from *John J. Nelson*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in one part of the district, viz., at Hardingswood, in which most of the residents are canal boatmen and their wives and families. Owing to the severe weather the canal is frozen, and these persons are therefore thrown out of employment. A soup kitchen has been opened, and a few local gentlemen have raised money from private sources to alleviate the distress as much as possible.

2. Nothing has been done to meet the distress by public authorities nor by voluntary agencies, except as stated above.

3. No register of unemployed is maintained.

4. The matter will be considered by my Council at an early meeting, but the distress is only regarded as temporary.

KIRKLEATHAM URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 4,209. Assessable Value (1892–93), £18,388.

Letter from *J. Rutherford*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress of any kind in this Council's district.

2. See answer to No. 1.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. No suggestions to make.

Knaresborough Urban District (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 4,649. Assessable Value (1892–93), £10,306.

Letter from *B. T. Woodd*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. Not aware of any exceptional distress beyond that which is caused by the severe weather, as our working population are mostly employed in agricultural labour or by the building trade, and are therefore now thrown out of work.

2. A voluntary committee was formed, and a large sum of money was raised for the relief of the distress. A daily distribution of soup, bread, tea, and coals has been made; the average number of recipients, men, women, and children, being from 800 to 860 daily. The Committee are not satisfied that all these belong properly to the town, as many tramps and others come in at the beginning of the winter in anticipation of getting a share of any charities which may be dispensed.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. We have every hope that when the frost breaks up the greater number may return to their work, though at all times of the year there are some who, from various causes, are out of work.

Leatherhead Urban District (Surrey).

Population (1891), 4,305. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *Rev. T. Utteston*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. There are a considerable number of men out of employment in the parish in consequence, mainly, of the severe weather. There is not much actual distress as the whole parish is well visited, and any cases of distress discovered are at once relieved.

2. A voluntary committee has been formed, half the members of which are also members of the District Council. For the four weeks commencing January 14th, the men were employed digging flints for the roads, and were paid a fair labour wage per yard. During the four weeks, the men worked four days in each week, and dug 523 yards of stone, and the sum of 61*l.* 16*s.* 4*d.* was paid in wages and for a few implements. This money was advanced by a member of the Committee, and will be repaid when the flints are sold to the District Council. During the past fortnight, as no more flints were required, the men have been employed on the parish allotment gardens, cleaning ditches, trimming hedges, and making good a road. For this work they are receiving 2*s.* 8*d.* per day; 22 men, all married men, were employed in the week ended 16th February.

3. An unemployed register is maintained, and no man is put on the roads whose name is not on the register, by which means the committee can carefully consider every case.

Littleborough Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 10,878. Assessable Value (1892–93), £36,498.

Letter from *G. H. Wild*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

In the opinion of the Council, there is no exceptional distress within their district, although the protracted frost has stopped almost all out-door employment, yet in nearly all cases a portion of the families represented by these outdoor workmen are engaged in one or other of the mills or workshops within the district.

I may add that the Council have during the past few weeks found partial employment for many of the temporary unemployed in the removal of snow, &c.

Little Hulton Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 6,693. Assessable Value (1892–93), £22,313.

Letter from *S. Heyes*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

The residents in this district are almost entirely employed in connection with coal mining and the cotton manufacture, and are suffering to some extent from the depression of trade. Comparatively few are outdoor labourers, and these few are thrown out of work by the severity of the weather, but it has not been considered necessary to organise any public body to relieve the distress.

The Council do not keep a register of the unemployed.

Llanfairfechan Urban District (Carnarvon).

Population (1891), 2,407. Assessable Value (1892-93), £76,050.

Letter from *J. O. Jones*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. Exceptional distress prevails owing to severe weather; and as the majority of the men work outside, they were therefore prevented from doing so.

2. The District Council have given work to eighteen men to break macadam; also a ladies' committee has been formed, and which provides soup and bread for about 130 children daily.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The propriety of compelling the London and North Western Railway Company to keep their labourers in regular employment, and not throw them out of employment in such times as these. The farmers are obliged to keep their men, frost or no frost.

Lymm Urban District (Chester).

Population (1891), 4,995. Assessable Value (1892-93), £18,307.

Letter from *J. Gregson*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in the district of the Council of Lymm, and the circumstance of the distress is due primarily to the severe weather.

2. The public authority is not doing anything to meet the distress; but there are a few voluntary agencies who have opened soup kitchens, and so relieve those who make application.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. I have no suggestion to make for the purpose of relieving such distress. The Council, I am sorry to say, cannot provide any work for the unemployed.

Lytham Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 4,656. Assessable Value (1892-93), £25,225.

Letter from *L. Fisher*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

There is not any exceptional distress in this district.

Margam Urban District (Glamorgan).

Population (1891), 6,274. Assessable Value (1892-93), £16,233.

Letter from *E. Knox*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. There is a certain amount of exceptional distress in the district of my Urban Council on account of the stoppage of one of the tinplate works, owing to want of orders and the competition with America.

2. Nothing has been done by my council to meet the distress, as we have had no application to do so; but immediately the frost comes to an end, Messrs. Pearson & Son (the contractors for the new dock and railway at Port Talbot) will be able to find work for most of the men here out of employment who are good for anything.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. The distress being merely temporary, as pointed out above, I have no suggestion to make beyond what has already been suggested.

MASHAM URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,173. Assessable Value (1892–93), £6,646.

Letter from *T. Theakston*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

Our district being not very thickly populated, there is not much distress in the parish, as most of the workmen are in constant employment; and those who are unable to work do not take much harm, being well looked after by private individuals, who are both able and willing to help them. I can say this from my own knowledge in Masham, and I have inquired of our Surveyor if there was much distress in the out townships; he reports that employment can be got in various ways for anyone able to work.

MELKSHAM URBAN DISTRICT (WILTS.).

Population (1891), 2,073. Assessable Value (1892–93), £6,487.

Letter from *C. Maggs*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

WE have no real distress in our district, although some trades are seriously affected by the protracted frosts, and labourers, who would in ordinary weather be employed, are in enforced idleness. A few exceptionally unfortunate cases have been dealt with by the Guardians, who have given them labour. Locally, the need does not call for making any suggestions as to relief.

MENAI BRIDGE URBAN DISTRICT (ANGLESEY).

Population (1891), 1,675. Assessable Value (1892–93), £4,748.

Letter from *T. O. Roberts*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE has been exceptional distress in this neighbourhood during the last month; but this has not been occasioned by any circumstances peculiar to this locality, but is entirely due to the severe weather. Were it not for the severe weather, the number of unemployed would be no greater than usual at this period of the year.

2. A distress fund has been opened here for the relief of the sufferers, which, having regard to the amount of distress here, has been liberally responded to; 45 cases were relieved through this agency during the week ended 16th instant, the relief being chiefly given in the form of coal and provisions. In addition to this public fund, there is a great deal being done in this district in the shape of private charity, not only during this severe weather, but all the year round. I may therefore safely say that the poor are well looked after here.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained here, it being quite unnecessary. Those who can and are willing to work generally find sufficient employment, excepting, of course, during severe weather such as we have had during the past few weeks.

4. I have no suggestions to make for relieving the distress applicable to this district except what is already being done. When this weather passes away, as it now seems likely to be doing, I do not doubt but that there will be plenty of work for as many as want it, as it is now approaching a period of the year when there is a demand for workmen.

METHLEY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 4,357. Assessable Value (1892–93), £16,846.

Letter from *T. Taylor*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress, and no measures have been thought necessary to be taken on the matter.

The population of the district is mainly engaged in coal mining; and although work has not been so plentiful as usual, there is no immediate cause why any extra measures should be taken to find employment, so far as I have been able to ascertain at the present time.

MIDDLEWICH URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 3,706. Assessable Value (1892-93), £9,489.

Letter from *F. B. Cooke*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. A GOOD number of men are out of employment owing to the severe weather, but beyond that the council consider the distress in the district is not exceptional.

2. A relief committee has been formed consisting of members of this council and some of the most prominent gentlemen in the town, and a subscription list opened which has been freely subscribed to. A free breakfast at 8·15 in the morning and tea at five in the evening is given to all children of the unemployed. The breakfast consists of bread and butter, jam, and hot coffee; and the tea, bread and butter, jam, and hot tea; 250 children are entertained every morning and evening. A small sub-committee has also been appointed to distribute bread and coal to the most deserving cases of distress, and an average of 50 loaves and 20 cwts. of coal is given away each day.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The Council has made application to the Local Government Board for sanction to borrow 12,000*l.* for works of water supply, and a letter was written on the 18th instant to the Local Government Board on the subject. If this sanction could be pushed on forthwith employment would be provided for a good number of hands.

MIDSOMER NORTON URBAN DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 5,041. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *F. Bird*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. WE only have comparatively a few cases of distress, and these have been brought about through the severe weather.

2. The Urban District Council has given employment to a few men, and others have obtained relief from the Guardians of the Poor. Some help has been given voluntarily, and this will be continued.

3. No register is kept.

4. It is generally considered that the existing arrangements will meet all the pressing cases of distress.

NANTY-GLO AND BLAINA URBAN DISTRICT (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 12,410. Assessable Value (1892–93), £46,618.

Letter from *J. A. Shepard*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. ENTIRE stoppage of tinplate works at Blaina, also at Nanty-glo, and the general out-door works in the district, owing to the severe weather.

2. Public subscriptions committee gave relief during the week ended the 16th instant, amounting to 2*l.* 4*s.* The Urban District Council gave relief work during week ended the same date, as follows:—Stone breaking, 24*l.* 5*s.* 1*d.*; deep sewer work, 12*l.* 18*s.* 1*d.* Total, 39*l.* 7*s.* 2*d.*

3. Unemployed register kept, with result that the Urban District Council have given 52 men employment, with preference given to heads of families.

4. Employment of a kind suitable to each district to be preferred to wholesale distribution of charity. This Urban District Council have made preparations to construct new public works to commence as soon as the weather permits.

NETHERTHONG URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population, (1891), 965. Assessable Value (1892–93), £3,365.

Letter from *J. E. Floyd*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. No distress.

3. No need for unemployed register.

NEW HUNSTANTON URBAN DISTRICT (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 1,225. Assessable Value (1892–93, £8,307.

Letter from *J. G. B. Glasier*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

NEW MILLS URBAN DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 6,661. Assessable Value (1892–93), £20,335.

Letter from *E. Godward*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. EXCEPT for the enforced absence of employment caused by the prolonged and severe frost, there is no exceptional distress in the district. Builders and out-workers generally have been idle about seven weeks.

2. Some relief distribution has taken place during the current week, from funds subscribed voluntarily, and collected in places of worship.

3. and 4. It is anticipated that the advent of milder weather, which we may reasonably except ere long, will restore the normal condition of affairs ; the major portion of the population is employed in mills, print works, &c., which are fairly engaged, and apart from the weather there are few unemployed, except the habitual street-corner man.

NEW QUAY URBAN DISTRICT (CARDIGAN).

Population (1891), 1,286. Assessable Value (1892–93), £2,261.

Letter from *T. Lloyd*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

As no exceptional distress exists in the district, it was not deemed necessary for the Council to take any steps in the matter.

NEWTON-IN-MAKERFIELD URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 12,861. Assessable Value (1892–93), £40,149.

Letter from *J. E. Worsley*, Law Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. IN the opinion of the chairman there is not any exceptional distress in this district.

2. Nothing is being done, inasmuch as no exceptional distress exists.

3. No register is maintained.

4. The Chairman has no suggestion to make. The Chairman desires me to add that during the coal strike distress last year private organizations were established here, and were able to deal effectively with the distress then existing. The district is a manufacturing and mining district, and the severe frost has not, to any appreciable extent, affected us.

NORTHFLEET URBAN DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 11,717. Assessable Value (1892–93), £38,087

Letter from *Sharland and Hatten*, Clerks, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the district, due almost entirely to the severe weather.

2. Extra men have been engaged by the Council in clearing snow. The average daily number during the week ended Saturday, 16th February, being 40 per day for three days. The voluntary agencies called into existence during the severe weather have been: Free breakfasts to children committee, a soup kitchen committee, and the Co-operative Society, Limited relief fund. Their efforts were scarcely available last week, but this week 500 quarts

quarts of soup a day have been dispensed, with bread to correspond, whilst the society aforesaid have given away 300 shilling tickets for grocery, meat, and coals. It is understood the Vicar has also received a few special contributions with which he has relieved the poor known to him. The foregoing is in addition to the usual charitable agencies of the ordinary kind.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The Council have no suggestions to make, save those which are embodied in the course adopted by them.

ORRELL URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 4,914. Assessable Value (1892-93), £7,742.

Letter from *H. Gorse*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. DISTRESS is beginning to be felt chiefly amongst stonemasons and bricklayers and their labourers owing to the continuance of severe weather.

2. No action is being taken by public authorities, but relief committees are being established and maintained by by voluntary subscription.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. It is thought that some power should be given by statute, whereby Boards of Guardians or District Councils could dispense relief out of the poor rate as soon as distress shows itself without making the recipients paupers.

PANTEG URBAN DISTRICT (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 6,479. Assessable Value (1892-93), £17,883.

Letter from *T. Williams*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district due to the stoppage of the tin and iron works and the severity of the weather.

2. About 1,000 persons are benefited daily by the distribution of soup, and twice per week with bread through voluntary agency.

3. A register in part is kept of widows and the unemployed.

4. Public works, as drainage and road-making. I am also desired to state that the Local Government Board have had before them for some time an application from this Council for a loan of 800*l*., part of which they have given the Council sanction to borrow for public works improvements, and this application needs to be pressed forward so that some of the unemployed may have work to do.

PENARTH URBAN DISTRICT (GLAMORGAN).

Population (1891), 12,424. Assessable Value (1892-93), £66,314.

Letter from *J. W. Morris*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is more distress in the district than in previous years, but this distress is owing chiefly to the weather which was, for some weeks before the frost set in, against persons employed in the building trade; therefore they were unable to meet the idleness produced by the severe frost.

2. The Council have provided work for all who were willing to work, and no deserving case has been overlooked, but many men are found who are unwilling to break stones or work on the road. The different religious denominations have been distributing food amongst those who are in distress, in addition to what the Council has done, and a great deal has been done in this manner towards alleviating the distress.

3. The Council have endeavoured to keep an unemployed register, but it is not of much use. A committee of the Council for dealing with the cases sits once a week, and oftener if necessary, when all urgent cases are dealt with.

4. The Chairman has no suggestions to make. As soon as the present frost breaks up, most of the distress will disappear.

PETERSFIELD URBAN DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 2,480. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *W. B. Edgeler*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

ALTHOUGH there is some considerable increase in the distress in my district, it has not been found necessary to make any special provision.

There is plenty of voluntary assistance in the way of contributions, and about 90 families are daily supplied with soup, coal and other necessaries being given according to the requirements of each case.

POCKLINGTON URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, EAST RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,577. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *A. Summerson*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is not a great amount of exceptional distress in the Council's district.

2. All known cases of distress have been relieved by voluntary subscriptions raised and administered by the minister of the different religious bodies in the town, by the private distribution of soup, and by the district council providing employment in the removal of snow, and breaking stones.

3. It has not been considered necessary to keep a register of the unemployed.

4. It is thought that the means already being adopted are sufficient to relieve the distress.

PONTYPRIDD URBAN DISTRICT (GLAMORGAN).

Population (1891), 19,969. Assessable Value (1892-93), £72,999.

Letter from *J. Roberts*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district owing to the severe weather.

2. The distress is being met by voluntary agencies. I called a public meeting nearly a fortnight ago, and in response we have had nearly 300*l.*, and we have been enabled to relieve the following number of those in distress. There are 11 soup kitchens, and for week ended 16th February we have given meals to 21,250. In addition, about 20 tons of coal has been distributed, and also large quantities of grocery.

3. We have not kept a register of the unemployed.

PORTISHEAD URBAN DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 2,500. Assessable Value (1892–93), £11,569.

Letter from *G. Cooper*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress, but this is due to the continued severity of the weather. The distress, apart from that and which existed before the severe weather commenced, is peculiar to our district, a large number of the labouring classes obtaining their livelihood by working on the Docks at this place, and as they are subsidiary to the Bristol Docks, and belong to them, the amount of shipping that comes here is of a limited nature, and not sufficient to maintain anything like regular employment.

2. The Urban District Council have given instructions to their Surveyor to put as many of the unemployed as he can upon such work as stone getting for the roads. A special relief fund has been started and liberally responded to and all cases of distress have been relieved. The exact numbers per week relieved is difficult to ascertain, as some are relieved more than once, but those in distress in the district may be reckoned at from 80 to 120 families.

3. No register is kept for the unemployed.

4. No. As far as the district is concerned we are contemplating an outlay of from 12,000*l.* to 14,000*l.* upon drainage works, and this will give employment to a large number of men; and I will request my Council to make all haste in starting such works, the Local Government Board having sanctioned the scheme and the loan for carrying out the same.

QUEENSBURY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 6,740. Assessable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *J. Richardson*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, but great distress prevails on account of the severe frost, as a large number are engaged in outdoor work.

2. To meet the distress the Urban District Council have engaged men to clear the snow from the roads, which have been almost impassable. Since the beginning of the year 122*l.* have been paid by the Council for this work. There have also been four voluntary agencies at work in different parts of the district, viz.:—

Victoria Hall, where 73 families have been relieved daily with soup and bread and coals at intervals.

Queensbury Liberal Club.—About 110 tickets valued at 1*s.* 6*d.* and 3*s.* are given per week for groceries and coals.

Ambler Thorn.—Twenty gallons of soup, and along with it bread, is given there daily.

George Tyson Ray has given 200 loaves and about 50 dinners to the needy.

3. No unemployed register is kept in this district.

REDDISH URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 6,854. Assessable Value (1892–93), £28,510.

Letter from *J. Higginson*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress exists in this District but such as is due to the severe weather.

2. Nothing is being done by the Council to meet such distress as exists, but it is being dealt with by voluntary agencies. Additional workmen have, however, been occasionally employed in the removal of snow and in clearing the roads. As a set-off to this, our own pavior and his labourers cannot follow their employment.

3. No register of unemployed persons is kept. Most of the working people are employed in textile and cognate industries, and they are fortunately not affected in their employment by the rigour of "an old-fashioned winter." The farms are chiefly dairy farms, on which the "regular hands" are employed summer and winter alike.

4. There is no need of any suggestions. Immediately the frost breaks and less inclement weather prevails, the persons who usually have fixed and fairly constant work, but who are now feeling the pinch of hunger and extreme cold, will be able to resume their ordinary callings.

REDDITCH URBAN DISTRICT (WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 11,295. Assessable Value (1892–93), £27,265.

Letter from *H. C. Browning*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THE trade in this district is fairly good; we have very few unemployed other than out-door labourers, and these are being dealt with by voluntary agencies in a satisfactory manner.

RISHWORTH URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 982. Assessable Value (1892–93), £4,026.

Letter from *J. R. H. Wheelwright*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, except, perhaps, amongst the navvies, who are at present employed in constructing a reservoir here for the Wakefield Corporation, and amongst out-door labourers; and it is in both cases entirely owing to the severe weather.

2. Two or three private individuals are distributing soup and bread amongst the above-mentioned navvy population, but, as far as I know, this is all the organised relief, public or private, that is at present being given.

3. There is no unemployed register kept for this district.

Ross Urban District (Hereford).

Population (1891), 3,575. Assessable Value (1892–93), £12,560.

Letter from *H. Southall*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this town, but only such as is caused by the severe weather, which has prevented all out-door building operations, and has thrown out of employment gardeners and labourers of all kinds.

2. The public authorities have not thought it necessary to take any steps at present. Voluntary committees have been formed, one of which has distributed bread and coal bi-weekly since January 12th; another has distributed soup frequently, and a third has given free breakfasts to those children attending Board schools who appear to stand in need of them. Besides this, there has been a large amount of private charity.

3. No "unemployed registry" has been maintained, as it is unnecessary here.

4. No suggestions to make.

Runcorn Urban District (Chester).

Population (1891), 20,050. Assessable Value (1892–93), £48,091.

Letter from *E. Marshall*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in the district of the Runcorn Urban District Council. This has been caused through depression in the shipping and other trades of the district, but it is owing principally to the closing of the greater portions of the chemical works in the town since the last week in November last; this has, of course, thrown a great many out of employment. The number of the unemployed has been largely added to since the severe weather set in, in consequence of so many trades being stopped and the canals here frozen over.

2. A fund has been opened here to relieve distress, and has been in operation since the last week in December last. Relief is granted weekly, and the average weekly number relieved is about 500. Last week 520 married and 150 single men and widows were relieved. Including this week's distribution, a sum of 900*l.* has been expended. About 70*l.* has been paid by the local authority for the breaking of road material for private street works; about 15 men per week have been relieved this way. The Runcorn Urban District Council has for some time been pushing forward works in connection with the making of private streets and sewerage so as to provide as much work as possible for local men; the frost, unfortunately, has stopped these operations. I may say that free breakfasts and dinners are being provided at the various schools in the town for the children.

3. We have schedules of unemployed in each ward carefully kept: we have found these invaluable in seeing that persons did not get relief more than once in a week, and in different wards.

4. Every possible effort is being put forth locally to meet the distress, and no further methods occur to us for relieving the distress than those obtaining.

Rushden Urban District (Northampton).

Population (1891), 7,443. Assessable Value (1892–93), £12,749.

Letter from *G. S. Mason*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is little exceptional distress in the district, the staple trade (shoe manufacturing) being fairly good and practically independent of the weather. Such distress as at present exists is confined to those persons engaged in the building trade and other out-door employments, and is almost entirely caused by the prolonged frost.

2. A distress fund has been organized on voluntary lines by a local solicitor, and many of the worst cases relieved. The number relieved by this agency up to the 16th instant was, approximately, 36. The trades unionists have also made a collection in aid of the unemployed, and distributed about 12*l.*

3. A list of cases relieved by the first of the above agencies is kept by the principal promoter.

St. Annes-on-the-Sea Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 2,588. Assessable Value (1892–93), £14,218.

Letter from *R. Knowles*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

The only distress prevalent here is in consequence of the stoppage of building operations through the severe frost, about 50 workmen being thus temporarily thrown out of employment. The most urgent cases are being relieved by private and public subscriptions, and this will be continued until the end of the frost.

St. Mary Church Urban District (Devon).

Population (1891), 6,849. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. W. D. Wollen*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in the district owing to the severe weather.

2. The District Council are employing men in laying out a public park, in cracking stones, and in as much ordinary work as possible ; there are also private relief funds subscribed.

3. An unemployed register is about to be kept.

4. If the Local Government Board will sanction a further loan of 200*l.* for extending the works necessary for laying out and completing Babbicombe Park, the District Council could at once employ more hands.

Seaham Harbour Urban District (Durham).

Population (1891), 9,044. Assessable Value (1892–93), £23,689.

Letter from *H. B. Wright*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

There is no exceptional distress in this district. The manufactories and industries which supply labour in this district have been for some time past affording constant employment.

Sheerness Urban District (Kent).

Population (1891), 14,492. Assessable Value (1892-93), £33,705.

Letter from *E. W. Brightman*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

There is not any exceptional distress in this district. The prolonged frost has prevented work in the building trades being carried on, and a good many men have been out of work in consequence.
There is no register of the unemployed.

Silsden Urban District (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 3,866. Assessable Value (1892–93), £6,403.

Letter from *J. Driver*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

There is a considerable amount of distress in the village amongst men employed in the building trade and out-door labourers generally ; to meet the same a soup kitchen has been opened, and about 50 families are being relieved daily. The Council are of opinion that the distress will cease after the breaking of the storm.

Skegness Urban District (Parts of Lindsey).

Population (1891), 1,488. Assessable Value (1892–93), £7,611.

Letter from *C. F. Grantham*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in this district. The late severe weather has, however, caused temporary loss of employment.

2. No action is being taken by public authorities, but during the severe weather a soup kitchen maintained by public subscription has distributed soup and bread daily to about 60 persons.

3. No register of the unemployed is maintained here, the same being unnecessary.

SMALLTHORNE URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 5,279. Assessable Value (1892-93), £5,450.

Letter from *F. M. Julian*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress existing in the district, due to the severe weather.

2. Nothing is being done by the Council to meet this distress, but voluntary agencies are making efforts to do so. The Vicar of the parish is dealing with about six daily applications, from funds at his disposal; and several tradesmen in the district have made free distributions of soup to some 200 applicants in the week ended Saturday the 16th instant.

3. No register of unemployed is kept.

4. The Council have held no meeting since the receipt of the Local Government Board Circular * of the 11th instant, and until they have considered that Circular, I am unable to make any suggestion for the purpose of relieving the distress.

SOOTHILL NETHER URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 5,645. Assessable Value (1892–93), £13,784.

Letter from *J. Greenwood*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is some distress in the district, but the same is due almost entirely to the severe weather.

2. A relief committee composed of ratepayers has been formed, and a fund has been raised, out of which 120 families were relieved during the week ended 16th February.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. I have no suggestions to make for the relief of the distress, as I think the committee have money in hand which will be sufficient to relieve the wants of the distressed until out-door labour can be resumed. The distress is chiefly confined to out-door labourers and the infirm, and I anticipate that in the course of a week or two it will to a large extent disappear.

SOOTHILL UPPER URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 5,848. Assessable Value (1892–93), £21,566.

Letter from *G. Day*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district; of course out-door labourers are thrown out of employment through the severe weather. To meet the above the Council are in the midst of a sewerage scheme which had been closed on account of the severe frost, but which has now been re-opened four days per week to find employment for the unemployed.

No unemployed register is kept in this district.

SOWERBY BRIDGE URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 10,409. Assessable Value (1892–93), £37,683.

Letter from *Rhodes* and *Evans*, Clerks, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is practically no distress by reason of want of employment which cannot be accounted for by reason of the severe weather under which we have been suffering.

2. The local authority have not thought it necessary to take any steps for the relief of such distress as there is. A relief fund has, however, been started by voluntary contributions and an amount of between 200*l.* and 300*l.* has been received which it is believed will be quite ample to relieve all legitimate cases of distress in the district. The average number relieved during the week ended 16th February was between 40 and 50 per day.

3. An unemployed register is not kept in this district.

4. As the distress is purely temporary in this district, we have no further suggestions to make.

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* See note * on page 87.

STAPLETON URBAN DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 14,589. Assessable Value (1892–93), £38,314.

Letter from *A. P. Monks*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THE distress here is partly on account of stress of weather and partly on account of depression of general trade in the Port of Bristol.

This District Council has no funds available at present, but have proposed works, waiting for sanction to borrow being received. Application made in November. Public inquiry in January. No decision yet received.

This district contains a large population, who are mainly workers in Bristol, and this Council is unable to get in its rates as a result of the poverty; thus it is tied as above, and by reason of its want of funds. Voluntary efforts have been put forth in the district. Soup and other food has been given to school children and unemployed. It appears to this Council that there should be some fixed time on the part of the Local Government Board between the application for sanction to borrow and the decision, so that authorities may be able to make arrangements accordingly. As in this case, though application was made early in winter, funds cannot be obtained until late in the spring, by which time doubtless the severe pinch will have passed away. If authority is given the work can at once be commenced. Relief has been given in four parts of this district. One report received is 1,500 persons relieved. Another effort results in relief to 280 daily for the past 15 days. The other two have done quite as much, but statistics not to hand; several other private efforts are being made.

No register of unemployed is kept.

STOWMARKET URBAN DISTRICT (EAST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 4,339. Assessable Value (1892–93), £8,941.

Letter from *S. Prentice*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is very little exceptional distress.

2. Relief work has been provided by the Council by opening a granite yard for men, at a wage of 2*s.* per day. Collections at church and chapel have been liberally responded to, and the systematic distribution of about 300 grocery tickets has been made by committees of ladies; coal tickets have been issued by the charity trustees to families not on the general list of the usual recipients. In addition, 60 cwts. of coal were given to poor people by a private gentleman, and the private distribution of charity is known to have been generously and largely augmented.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The principal want of employment is due to the severe weather, also to the slackness of trade with the Explosives Company and the Nitric Acid Works of Prentice Brothers. If the War Department could place an order for gun cotton with the Explosives Company, nearly all the unemployed would find work with one or other of these firms.

SUTTON URBAN DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 13,977. Assessable Value (1892–93), £76,389.

Letter from *T. D. Pettiver*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. EXCEPTIONAL distress has prevailed in the district among the working classes occupied in out-door employment owing to the severe weather only.

2. The question of starting relief works has been very carefully considered by the District Council, but as such works would be out-door work it was found impracticable owing to the severe frost to start them; as an alternative, to relieve distress, the Council, with the Rector of Sutton and the leading inhabitants, have formed themselves into a relief committee, and a fund has been most handsomely subscribed to, some of the subscribers undertaking to contribute 2*l.* per week and 1*l.* 1*s.* per week to the fund until the frost breaks. Three large soup kitchens have been opened, under the direct superintendence of the District Council and their officials, and the relieving officer of the district, and the average daily number of persons relieved during the week ended the 16th of February was about 250 per day. The soup kitchens are free to all needful cases without money or tickets. Coals have also been purchased in large quantities out of the fund and delivered in bags of 1 cwt. each in every necessary case, and no one in the district need go without food or fuel; he has only to ask and have if he is in want.

3. A register is not maintained; it is contemplated starting one in the future, but it is very doubtful in a district like Sutton whether it would relieve distress.

4. The Council have no suggestions to offer, beyond starting soup kitchens and distributing food; it has been considered that in the future stores of stones might be kept to be broken.

The area of the district is 1,835 acres, and the population about 15,000.

SWAFFHAM URBAN DISTRICT (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 3,636. Assessable Value (1892–93), £8,373.

Letter from *H. Lee Warner*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress at present in our district, partly owing to the long-continued frost, which affects all connected with the building trade, but still more owing to agricultural depression, which makes all farmers and landowners curtail their expenditure, and has at present thrown about 34·7 per cent. of our regular agricultural labourers out of work. How far this is only temporary remains to be seen. Some hold that it will pass with the frost, if the frost ever does pass; others maintain that the agriculturists have lost their credit as well as their capital, and will even further reduce their labour bills, however suicidal such a course may be.

2. We have a voluntary relief committee, which is giving free breakfasts to 45 children five times a week, and is selling soup at half-price, getting rid of 600 quarts a week. Our Council made a little work out of snow-carting for eight men. Farmers are also keeping on their men.

3. The secretary of the relief committee endeavours to find odd jobs from one or two benevolent individuals for the most pressing cases. I myself keep a list of unemployed. Emigration is at a stand-still.

4. Your Honourable Board are aware that we have long been considering a scheme for completing the town drainage, which hangs fire owing to the demands of Mr. Wayland's agent for sporting rights over the old sewage ground and the new acreage which we hope to acquire. We are now trying to negotiate with the agent of another property, but I expect similar results. It is a terrible pity that land for sewage purposes cannot be acquired as easily as for allotments. The farmers on our Council expect that all labourers who will work will easily find work after the frost. Two farms have changed hands, but will soon resume work. Distress always recurs from December to February. This year, however, it has begun later, though it is now accentuated by the weather.

I may add that the calculation, 34 per cent. of men in irregular farm-work, is Mr. Wilson Fox's. The farmers on our Council think it an over-estimate.

TETBURY URBAN DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 2,173. Assessable Value (1892–93), £3,829.

Letter from *T. S. Crew*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. VERY little distress, and that due to the severity of the weather.

2. The offer of breaking stones for repairing the roads. A ladies' visiting committee, the poor being well looked after in their own homes. The first agency relieved 10; the second, 20.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

THORNHILL URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 9,606. Assessable Value (1892–93), £33,346.

Letter from *J. H. Dyson*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is undoubtedly exceptional distress prevailing in this district at present, due in some measure to exceptionally severe weather, and some to prolonged depression in trade, but more largely to the stoppage of one of the Glass Bottle Works in the district a year ago, the workpeople being unable to find fresh employment of a permanent character.

2. My late Local Board, realising that many were suffering from want of employment, let a portion of the digging for the laying of sewerage pipes in connection with our sewerage scheme which is in progress. The work was let at contract prices for similar work, and my Council may possibly start to lay out new recreation grounds in order to provide further employment for this winter. The Independent Labour Club at Thornhill Lees, in this district, have sought to relieve the distress by gratuitous distribution of soup, &c.

3. There is no such register kept in the ordinary way, but a list was supplied to our Chairman on Tuesday last containing the names of about 140 men who were wanting work.

4. Our Chairman is unable to suggest steps for any permanent remedy. A Joint Conference of Town and Urban District Councils in the Dewsbury Union has been summoned, to be held at the Town Hall, Dewsbury, on the 27th instant, to consider the subject.

THORNTON URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 5,680. Assessable Value (1892–93), £12,742.

Letter from *W. Pickles*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. WHAT exceptional distress there is in this district is caused by the protracted frost ; no out-door employment been possible this year.

2. A Relief Committee was formed some time since to meet the distress caused by the stoppage of a firm in liquidation, but as they have now recommenced working, the Committee have distributed the balance and other subscriptions amongst the most necessitous cases during this distress.
The Salvation Army also, during the last two or three weeks, have opened a soup-kitchen, and last week distributed bread and soup to from 80 to 100 families on five days during the week.
Mr. Joseph Craven, of Ashfield, also distributed during two days bread and soup to about the same number of families, besides having given during the continuance of the severe weather 10 tons of coal, blankets, &c., to necessitous cases.

3. No register kept.

4. No suggestion to make except as it has been met in this case.

TICKHILL URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 1,450. Assessable Value (1892–93), £2,797.

Letter from *R. Wood*, Treasurer, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is distress, but principally owing to the severe weather.

2. The distress has been met both ways. The men in getting and breaking stone average 40 the week ended on the 16th ; this week, so far, nine (owing to the partial thaw). Coals and groceries to 84 families. Soup twice a week, and free breakfasts to children every morning (except Sunday) number from 105 the least, to 144 the largest, which will be continued while the storm lasts.

3. No register kept.

4. If there were more thrift and less drinking, there would be very much less distress.

TWICKENHAM URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 16,027. Assessable Value (1892–93), £95,863.

Letter from *G. B. Laffan*, Surveyor, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is distress in this district, and it is due entirely to the severe weather.

2. On and since the 16th instant, we are daily employing an average of 40 extra hands at our stone yard and gravel pit to relieve the distress. There are several voluntary agencies at work as well, such as soup kitchens, philanthropic societies, &c.

3. An unemployed register is kept, and applicants are employed in their turn for one day, with, I believe, good result to them, but very little help to the Local Authority.

4. If useful work that could be done in severe weather were discovered and provided, it would be a benefit.

UCKFIELD URBAN DISTRICT (EAST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 2,497. Assessable Value (1892–93), £8,327.

Letter from *R. J. Streatfield*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is some exceptional distress owing to the continued long frost.

2 A public soup kitchen has been open from 1st January to 16th February two days a week, and is now open three days a week ; it is supported by voluntary contributions. The amount of soup distributed during the week ended 16th February was 167 gallons. All children attending the public elementary schools are supplied free, and poor families by means of tickets ; others are allowed to buy it at 1*d.* per quart. Work has been provided in some cases by private individuals for the unemployed.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The distress is not at present of a character to call for any extraordinary action on the part of the Local Authority.

VENTNOR URBAN DISTRICT (ISLE OF WIGHT).

Population (1891), 6,090. Assessable Value (1892-93), £33,556.

Letter from *A. Houston*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

MY letter of the 19th February will give you information as to what steps this Council is taking with regard to relieving the distress brought about by unemployment.

(Extract from Letter above referred to).

"The Council have under consideration several items of public work, the largest of which are rendered necessary by the recent enlargements of their district, which will involve sewering, &c. Plans for these are, however, not sufficiently matured to enable the Council to make immediate application to your Board for a loan; but there are three smaller matters of immediate necessity which they are anxious to commence at once. The first of these is a short length of sewer, to replace one destroyed by a landslip. Plans and estimates marked A. refer to this, and are enclosed herewith. The second is also a short length of sewer, necessary to make complete a system of sewers down the Zigzag-road, and to make provision for two houses which are approaching completion, and for other houses likely to be built in the same neighbourhood. Plans and estimates marked B. refer to this, and are also enclosed herewith. The third is the completion of a footpath and lighting in the Alpine-road. The enclosed plan and estimate marked C. refer to this.

The Council intend, as soon as the whole of their plans are completed, to make application for leave to borrow a sum, which will probably be about 3,000*l*. They, however, desire to have the provisional sanction of your Board to raise the money required for the above works by a temporary loan from their treasurer, so as to enable the work to be proceeded with without delay."

WALTHAM HOLY CROSS URBAN DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 6,066. Assessable Value (1892–93), £23,907.

Letter from *F. E. Jessopp*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THE distress in the district of this Council is not exceptional. The distress is entirely due to the severe weather. The Council have commenced making a new sewer in order to give employment to as many of the men who are out of work and who are capable of undertaking this class of work.

During the week ended the 16th February there were no men employed under this scheme as the work was only commenced on the 18th instant, since which time 25 men have been employed daily. There is no voluntary agency, neither is there any unemployed register maintained in the district.

My Council have no suggestions to make as to the relief of distress.

WALTON-ON-THAMES URBAN DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 7,988. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *R. Somers-Smith*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THE distress in this district is severe, but not greatly in excess of the normal rate at this period of the year. Large numbers of men employed on market gardens and in the building trades are necessarily out of work in hard frost.

2. The District Council are employing extra labour in digging gravel for the road; this work would usually be spread over the year. The Chertsey Union are providing relief work, but this being at Ottershaw, six miles off, men from this district avail themselves of it very little. A great deal of soup is being distributed by private individuals and associations, in addition to the ordinary charitable organisations, with the result that the suffering at all events among the deserving poor is greatly alleviated.

3. No register of unemployed is kept.

4. There is no lack of employment for good workmen, except in bad weather, and wages are sufficiently high to enable prudent men to provide for slack times. Apart from misfortune, with which the ordinary charitable agencies are able to cope, the distress in winter is mainly among the idle and unthrifty. I cannot suggest anything for them beyond the special work already provided by the District Council and the Guardians. The remedy lies in raising their moral standard.

WANSTEAD URBAN DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 7,092. Assessable Value (1892–93), £39,754.

Letter from *M. Mumford*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district. There are, of course, some trades which have been particularly affected by the severe weather, and men are temporarily out of employment, but there is nothing here which requires any exceptional measures.

WARE URBAN DISTRICT (HERTFORD).

Population (1891), 5,256. Assessable Value (1892–93), £19,442.

Letter from *G. H. Gisby*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the district, but it is mainly due to the severe weather. The class of persons who are suffering most are: (*a*) The bargemen, who are prevented from work on account of the river being frozen; (*b*) the bricklayers and others connected with the building trade, whose work is also stopped by the frost.

2. The distress is being met to some extent by distribution of food provided by voluntary subscriptions. The number receiving relief through these voluntary agencies shall be ascertained and furnished to you.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained, as there is no lack of work in the town when weather permits.

4. No further suggestion to make for the purpose of relieving such distress.

WARLEY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,912. Assessable Value (1892–93), £7,265.

Letter from *A. Leyland*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

I DO not consider there is any exceptional distress in my district other than that caused by the severe weather, which is being temporarily relieved from private funds.

WATFORD URBAN DISTRICT (HERTFORD).

Population (1891), 17,008. Assessable Value (1892-93), £61,931.

Letter from *H. M. Turner*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1 and 2. UNTIL the 3rd January last no exceptional distress appeared to prevail in this district. On the 4th January, in consequence of the frost, the District Council employed a considerable number of men, who had no work, in their gravel pits until the 12th of that month, when they were able to close them. On the 28th January the District Council found it necessary to re-open the gravel pits, and since that time they have employed men who have desired work to the number of 190 each day. The men are employed in gangs of 20, and are paid by the result, at the rate of 9*d*. per yard for gravel, sand, and shingle obtained. The average earnings for each man during a period of a fortnight was found to be 2*s*. 1*d*. per day, some of the men earning as much as 3*s*. each. On the 6th February the District Council found it necessary to limit the time of working each day from 8 a.m. till 1 p.m., and not to open the gravel pit on Saturdays. The efforts of the District Council have been ably seconded by the local Society for Improving the Condition of the Poor, who have systematically relieved 243 families.

3. No register of the unemployed has yet been started.

Wavertree Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 13,764. Assessable Value (1892–93), £74,250.

Letter from *R. Mealing*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in this district excepting such as is attributable to the severe weather and improvidence.

2. Nothing is being done by public authorities to meet the distress, but that a great deal of relief is being afforded by voluntary agencies—350 relieved daily last week, but more this.
At the Congregational Mission Room good soup, with bread and porridge, is distributed daily to some 300 applicants. At the Cambridge-street Mission Hall soup, &c., is served to over 100 daily, and soup, &c., was on Monday last and yesterday distributed to some 200 persons at the Coffee House Hotel, in addition to which the Wavertree District Relief Society is doing an excellent work, as well as that which is being accomplished by numerous benevolent ladies and others. Moreover, a considerable quantity of coal has been given away in the district.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. So far as this district is concerned, the prevailing distress is being dealt with in a liberal and cheerful manner.

Wellingborough Urban District (Northampton).

Population (1891), 15,068. Assessable Value (1892–93), £37,301.

Letter from *D. Dulley*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. In my opinion, there is not any exceptional distress in this urban district. What distress there is has been caused almost entirely by the stoppage of work from the severe weather. The staple trade is the manufacture of boots and shoes and of boot and shoe uppers, and I believe there has been no lack of work in those trades. A good many bricklayers, labourers, farm and general labourers have been out of work, but not more than is usually the case in times of prolonged frost.

2. The Urban District Council have instructed their Surveyor to set as many men on to work as he could, and he has been, and is now, employing several on works of road improvement. A relief committee (organised some few years ago) has been administering relief in cases of necessity. They do not give money, but always orders for goods. The average daily number relieved by such committee during the week (six days) ended 16th instant was a fraction over 14.

3. A register is not kept.

4. I have no suggestions to make.

Withington Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 25,729. Assessable Value (1892–93), £164,910

Letter from *J. Moore*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in the district, owing entirely to the severe weather.

2. Voluntary relief committees have been formed in the parts of the district where distress prevails, to raise funds and distribute relief, with the following results, viz. :—

Withington.

During the week ended 16th February the number of cases dealt with would be about 55, or say 330 persons, being equal to 47 persons daily. The help given has assumed the form of tickets for food and fuel. So far about 10*l.* or 12*l.* per week seems to have been needed, to make very modest allowances ; more will be needed if the severe weather continues, as matters gradually become worse.

Burnage and Ladybarn.

The worst cases have been met by tickets for provisions and coal, and dispensed from the local shops and dealers. The cases number about 60 ; the committee are not able to deal with them daily.

Albert Park.

A committee has been formed, and the distress has been relieved by voluntary contributions. Tickets for food and coal have been given to 15 distressed families. It is considered that the distress is being adequately met, and money subscribed for the purpose and not required has been handed over to other places more in need.

Chorlton-cum-Hardy.

Chorlton-cum-Hardy.

I am informed by the Rector that there is no exceptional distress in this part beyond what the present parochial efforts can supply.

Didsbury.

In this part of the district a well-organised committee is at work. A circular was issued by the committee, and the response to it has placed them in a position to thoroughly meet the distress for several weeks to come. The distress is entirely owing to the severe weather. Every case is investigated, and the deserving ones receive a sufficient supply of different kinds of food and coal. The following gives the number of meals given from 9th February to 17th :—

9	February	-	-	-	-	286	15	February	-	-	-	-	380
11	„	-	-	-	-	317	16	„	-	-	-	-	383
12	„	-	-	-	-	350	17	„	-	-	-	-	358
13	„	-	-	-	-	372							
14	„	-	-	-	-	380				Total	-	-	- 2,826

One hundred and nine tickets for coal have been given. The food is made in accordance with the formulæ issued by Dr. Downes, of the Local Government Board. There is no need for concern in this portion of the district.

According to the foregoing, it will be observed that in some portions of the district there is an immediate want of funds.

4. I would suggest that, in the event of voluntary contributions not being sufficient to meet the temporary distress, power should be given to the local authority to contribute what is considered absolutely necessary for the purpose.

WITHNELL URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 2,779. Assessable Value (1892-93), £.———.

Letter from *J. W. Carter*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is some distress within the Urban District of Withnell, due principally to the severe weather. The frost has caused the quarries in the district to be stopped, but many of the workmen at these places have wives or children employed at cotton mills or other works in the neighbourhood, and the distress is therefore of a limited character.

2. The few people that are really in need are being relieved by voluntary agencies.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained by the Urban District Council of Withnell.

4. It would appear that the present mode of relieving the distress within the district is effectual.

Perhaps I ought to add that Withnell is fortunate at present in having all the cotton mills there in full work, whereas many of the mills in this part of Lancashire are either stopped altogether or are working short time.

WOODBRIDGE URBAN DISTRICT (EAST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 4,480. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *W. Brooke*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE has been very little distress in this district.

2. In order to meet the wants of those who from the long-protracted frost have been prevented from carrying on their usual avocations, this Council gave work to several hands (ranging from 46 to 52) in raising and breaking stones, and ditching.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. I have no suggestion to offer for future relief, as the various methods which might be adopted will depend upon the situation and requirements of the district in which relief is requisite. Woodbridge is exceptionally well-off for both public and private charity. The soup kitchen has been opened more frequently, and larger quantities have been made and dispensed by the aid of considerably augmented voluntary subscriptions.

WORSBOROUGH URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 9,905. Assessable Value (1892-93), £25,803.

Letter from *A. Clegg*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district except what is caused by the severe weather.

2. Nothing has been done to meet the distress.

3. No register of unemployed is maintained.

4. I have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving the distress, which is not great in this district.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

Alresford Rural District (Southampton).

Population (1891), 6,628. Rateable Value (1892–93), £36,280.

Letter from *M. H. Moss*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in the district; a few bricklayers are temporarily out of work on account of the weather.

2. Nothing has been found necessary more than usual at this time of year.

3. No register opened.

4. No suggestions to make.

Alston-with-Garrigill Rural District (Cumberland).

Population (1891), 3,384. Rateable Value (1892–93, £14,237).

Letter from *T. Richardson*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in this district. At the last meeting of the Board of Guardians, held on Saturday last, there was only one application for exceptional relief.

2. There are about 260 men out of employment owing to the severe snowstorm which has prevailed here since the beginning of January; but all have been employed opening out the main and district roads for traffic. The highway committee of the County Council have paid, up to the 16th instant, 296*l.*, and the District Council 65*l.*, making a total of 361*l.*

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. I have no suggestions to make; but I may add the farmers in this locality, who are all hill-farmers, are suffering great loss from the severity of the storm and want of fodder. The consequence will no doubt be disastrous.

Atherstone Rural District (Warwick).

Population (1891), 14,076. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. K. Bourne*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this town, partly due to the severe weather, but chiefly to the depression in the hat manufacturing trade, which is the staple trade of the town. In some measure this depression has arisen from a strike which took place about two years ago, and which lasted 27 weeks.

2. At a meeting of the Board of Guardians yesterday, the Circular* of the Local Government Board as to the employment of the unemployed was considered; but the only work available was stone-breaking, and this could not be satisfactorily done in the frosty weather. It was, therefore, decided that it must be left to voluntary effort to cope with the distress. A meeting of the inhabitants was held last night, and 155 applications were considered. Of these 74 families, containing together 128 adults and 197 children, were relieved by means of bread and grocery tickets. The relief was based on 2*s.* 6*d.* for each adult, and 1*s.* for each child, and it is hoped that sufficient money will be raised to continue the relief till the weather changes.

3. Hitherto there has been no register of the unemployed.

4. I would suggest that it would be a great assistance to the Board of Guardians if the Local Government Board would instruct them how to deal with these cases other than by work, as they are unable to find employment in this weather. The frosty weather, which throws so many out of employment (such as quarrymen and others), prevents the Guardians being able to carry out the work suggested by the Local Government Board.

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* See note * on page 87.

BANBURY RURAL DISTRICT (OXFORD AND WARWICK).

Population (1891), 12,425. Rateable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *E. L. Fisher*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is not, in the knowledge of the council, any exceptional distress in the district.
2. There is nothing being done by public authorities in the rural districts.
3. There is no unemployed register kept in this district.
4. The council have no suggestions to make.

BARROW-ON-SOAR RURAL DISTRICT (LEICESTER).

Population (1891), 19,072. Rateable Value (1892–93), £128,041.

Letter from *J. S. Smith*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, and it is due almost entirely to the severe weather.

2. No action to meet the distress has been taken by local authorities; but voluntary agencies have relieved, and are continuing to relieve, the unemployed in a fairly adequate manner.

3. No unemployed register has been kept, except with reference to the relief of the necessitous unemployed working-men.

4. I have no suggestions to make to the Local Government Board for the purpose of relieving the distress referred to, as such distress is already being relieved by means of contributions administered by local committees.

BELFORD RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 5,128. Rateable Value (1892–93), £52,678.

Letter from *J. Laing*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

I HAVE received the circular inquiring if there is any exceptional distress in this district, and I am pleased to inform you that there is none.

BELPER RURAL DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 23,173. Rateable Value (1892–93), £147,701.

Letter from *J. Pym*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is not any more distress than usually occurs amongst our out-door workmen when a lengthy frost sets in.
2. The public have liberally subscribed and relieved cases of known distress; numbers cannot be furnished.
3. No unemployed register kept.
4. Greater carefulness on the part of those who at the earliest moment seek public charity.

BLYTHING RURAL DISTRICT (EAST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 23,083. Rateable Value (1892–93), £118,461.

Letter from *C. White*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

WE have not exceptional distress in the district, and therefore the public authorities or the voluntary agencies are not called upon in any way to relieve them.

BRADFIELD UNION {BRADFIELD. / GORING.} RURAL DISTRICTS { (BERKS). / (OXFORD).

Population (1891), {Bradfield, 15,183. / Goring, 2,834.} Rateable Value, 1892-93, £136,979.

Letter from *H. G. Willink*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. I THINK there is unusual want of employment, owing to farming operations being unusually hindered by the long frost. I should hardly call it exceptional distress. The numbers of out-door and in-door paupers are both less than at the corresponding period of last year, averaging during the last five or six weeks about 33 out-door and about 110 in-door. Tramps, I should say, have averaged not above five per week.

2. The Guardians have not taken any special steps, nor have they been asked to do so. As to voluntary agencies, I am unable to speak. I have not heard of any such organisations. In my own neighbourhood there has been probably some increase of private charitable relief; and employers have done their best to keep men at work; but I am not aware that there has been exceptional actual distress.

3. No unemployed register kept to my knowledge.

4. I do not think there is anything which cannot be dealt with by the Poor Law, and by private charity.

CAISTOR RURAL DISTRICT (PARTS OF LINDSEY).

Population (1891), 14,480. Rateable Value (1892-93), £126,943.

Letter from *J. E. W. Loft*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

As far as the Caistor Union Rural District Council is concerned, we know nothing of any exceptional distress.

The Poor Law branch of the Caistor Union Rural District Council meets on Saturday next, and I will take care that your circular is laid before it.

As far as I can remember, there was nothing brought before the Board at its meeting on the 9th of February that could at all be looked upon as exceptional distress—nothing that could not be met by the ordinary mode of relief. No doubt there may be several people, both in Caistor and Market Rasen, out of work owing to the severe weather, but as yet they have not applied to us, as Guardians or District Councillors, for exceptional treatment.

CERNE RURAL DISTRICT (DORSET).

Population (1891), 6,122. Rateable Value (1892-93), £49,967.

Letter from *H. H. Palairet*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the Cerne Union district due to peculiar circumstances. There is distress from severity of the weather and want of employment by depression in agriculture.

2. The Poor Law authorities deal with all cases applying for relief. There are no voluntary agencies.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. In this district the Board of Guardians can deal with the present position of matters.

CHAPEL-EN-LE-FRITH RURAL DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 14,013. Rateable Value (1892-93), £86,229.

Letter from *J. B. Boycott*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is and has for several weeks past been exceptional distress in this district, chiefly owing to the unusually severe weather, which has caused entire stoppage of out-door labour in some instances, and partial stoppage in others. A large number of working men in this locality earn their living in limestone quarries and works which are necessarily interfered with to a considerable extent during severe frosts, but very few of such quarries and works so far have been entirely closed.

2. Very little has been done so far by the local public authorities to meet the distress, inasmuch as the same cause which has thrown many men out of employment prevents the authorities from finding them employment; but considerable relief has been afforded to the unemployed and poor classes in this and other parishes throughout the district by relief committees. In this parish alone soup and bread are being distributed three times a week to about 90 families, the majority of whom have also had tickets for coal and groceries in addition; and these remarks apply particularly to the week ended Saturday the 16th instant. Very few extra applications for relief have been received by the Poor Law authorities, and it is believed that these local voluntary relief organisations have been sufficient to meet all extraordinary distress.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. We have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving the present distress, as it is believed that the means which already exist for doing so are sufficient for the purpose.

CHARD RURAL DISTRICT (SOMERSET AND DORSET).

Population (1891), 20,510. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *N. Salter Beviss*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

No exceptional distress prevails in the district comprised within the limits of the Chard Union.

The condition of the working classes in this district has not been very much affected by the severity of the weather, inasmuch as the lace, silk, and cloth factories have given full employment to the operatives in the towns; and as an agriculturist, I am in a position to state that work of some kind or other is found by the employers of labour on farms, and that the few isolated cases of distress are invariably met by voluntary agencies.

Soup has been daily supplied during the cold weather in the towns of Chard, Ilminster, and Crewkerne, to those who chose to apply for it; and a considerable sum of money has been collected in the former town, and devoted to the supply of comforts to the sick and aged.

Instructions were given to the master of the union at the last meeting of the Board to relax the rule applying to the food of the vagrants, who now receive warm tea and soup in lieu of the usual cold rations.

CHEPSTOW RURAL DISTRICT (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 7,933. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *F. Evans*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

No distress of any magnitude exists. Some few cases are well met by private charity in the various parishes, and to the present there exists no necessity for the interference of the Council.

The Chairman wishes me to state that he is sure the Council will do their duty if circumstances hereafter make their action a necessity.

CHORLEY RURAL DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 16,996. Rateable Value (1892–93), £149,349.

Letter from *W. W. Burnell*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is a certain amount of distress in the district owing to the prolonged frost, but not from any circumstances peculiar to the district.

2. There is nothing being done in our Rural District as to the distress, there being no necessity for taking exceptional steps up to the present time, nor has it been found necessary to establish any voluntary agencies for giving relief.

CIRENCESTER RURAL DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER AND WILTS).

Population (1891), 12,877. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *R. A. Iles*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

As chairman of the Rural District Council and of the Cirencester Board of Guardians, I have not seen or heard of any exceptional distress. No application of that kind has come before the District Council; and at the Board of Guardians we have had no applications beyond the usual winter applications, with which the Board of Guardians have no difficulty in dealing.

COSFORD RURAL DISTRICT (WEST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 12,369. Rateable Value (1892–93), £63,874.

Letter from *F. Pocklington*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. DISTRESS slightly in excess of previous year owing to excessive duration of severe weather.

2. It has been met without recourse to public authorities or voluntary agencies.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

CRICK RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON.)

Population (1891), 2,427. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. B. Gray*, Vice-chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. I BELIEVE there is, and has been for some weeks past, exceptional distress in this district, and that such distress has been caused partly by the severity of the weather, and partly by the general agricultural depression.

2. Local efforts have been made by voluntary agencies for the relief of the unemployed; but that I have no means of ascertaining the average daily number relieved during the week ended 16th February.

3. There is no register of the unemployed maintained; nor

4. Have I any suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving such distress.

DENDRAETH / GLASLYN } RURAL DISTRICTS IN FESTINOG UNION, IN MERIONETH AND CARNARVON COUNTIES.

Population (1891) { Part in Merioneth, 8,561 / Part in Carnarvon, 3,003 } Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *T. Roberts*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress.

DEVIZES RURAL DISTRICT (WILTS).

Population (1891), 13,318. Rateable Value (1892–93), £81,684.

Letter from *F. M. Lush*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district other than that necessarily consequent on a severe winter. The district is agricultural, and labourers are engaged at regular wages, whether employment can or cannot be found for them. Many of the avocations of husbandry, such as manure-hauling, can be better carried on during a frost than when a thaw has rendered the ground difficult or impossible to be traversed.

DISLEY RURAL DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 2,260. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *R. L. Spencer*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress exists amongst the working classes of this locality, save and except about 10 men employed as builders' labourers and jobbing gardeners, who are prevented from working by the severity of the weather.

2. Nothing has been done up to now by this Council, no applications having been made for assistance to it. I am informed, however, that a ladies' committee has collected funds sufficient to give aid to the wives and children of those unemployed, also for the aged, sick, and infirm residents requiring assistance, but I have no list of the number of these cases.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. The present severe weather makes this a most difficult question to answer in a purely rural district like ours, especially as we have not yet possession of the highways, &c. I may also add that the present Council are all new members, and have no previous experience of these matters. I will, however, bring your circular before the Council on Tuesday, the 26th instant, after which, if possible, a fuller reply shall be sent.

DORCHESTER RURAL DISTRICT (DORSET).

Population (1891), 10,416. Rateable Value (1892-93), £78,724.

Letter from *G. M. Homer*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. A LITTLE extra distress caused by severe weather, but, generally speaking, not of a serious nature. Masons, bricklayers, labourers, &c., mostly out of employment, but often have a small fund to fall back on.

2. Nothing more than usual in such a season.

3. No unemployed register kept; as yet no occasion for it.

4. As to suggestions: too long a subject to enter on here, but spade cultivation of land and lowering hills on main roads are two subjects which should be well considered.

DOVER RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 7,166. Rateable Value (1892-93), £44,900.

Letter from *J. G. Churchward*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is not, to my knowledge, any exceptional distress in this district. There are numbers of labouring men temporarily out of work, but they are only awaiting change of weather to enable them to resume work.

2. No steps have been considered specially necessary by the public authorities.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. No suggestions to make, for the reasons above given.

DWYRAN RURAL DISTRICT (ANGLESEY).

Population (1891), 3,171. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *T. Owen*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress.

2. Only Union relief.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions necessary.

EAST ELLOE RURAL DISTRICT (PARTS OF HOLLAND AND NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 8,599. Rateable Value (1892-93), £84,042.

Letter from *B. L. Brittain*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

I HAVE not observed nor heard of many men out of employment in this Rural District.

EASTHAMPSTEAD RURAL DISTRICT (BERKS).

Population (1891), 13,704. Rateable Value (1892-93), £67,515.

Letter from *C. J. Cave*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

EASTRY RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 12,780. Rateable Value (1892-93), £88,112.

Letter from *F. S. Cloke*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

EAST WARD RURAL DISTRICT (WESTMORLAND).

Population (1891), 11,951. Rateable Value (1892-93), £130,277.

Letter from *W. Lyde*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district. Whatever exceptional distress might have been caused by the intensely severe weather has been prevented by the employment given to every man willing to work in the cutting of snow-drifts. These have been unusually numerous and deep. Our local man informs me that he has had, since the severe weather set in, on an average, 80 men employed daily at 3*s.* a day under the County Council, in keeping the main roads open, and this will be the case for some time to come.

2. In consequence, the public authorities have not been called upon to take any special measures for the relief of the unemployed.

3. A register of the unemployed has never been kept, as far as I know, in this district.

These statements I make on my own responsibiilty, and from my own local knowledge. I will bring the subject of your circulars before the Council on Monday next, the 25th instant; and whatever additional information I may be able to obtain then I will communicate to you without delay.

ELY RURAL DISTRICT (ISLE OF ELY).

Population (1891), 12,716. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *E. B. Claxton*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

A NUMBER of persons (agricultural labourers for the most part) have been temporarily thrown out of work through the very severe weather recently experienced, most of whom will be able to go to work again as soon as the frost abates, but the Council are not aware of any exceptional distress, or that any action has been taken by public authorities or voluntary agencies to meet distress.

No unemployed register has been maintained, and they have no suggestions to make as to dealing with exceptional distress.

FAVERSHAM RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 15,292 Rateable Value (1892-92), £107,972

Letter from *W. E. Rigden*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no more distress in this district than must necessarily be caused by the severe weather. It has been met by voluntary efforts in the shape of gifts of soup, bread, and coal, and children's dinners, and with milder weather the exceptional distress will cease.

FYLDE RURAL DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 11,950. Rateable Value (1892-93) £123,015.

Letter from *W. Thompson*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no serious exceptional distress in the Rural District. There is, however, distress to a certain extent, but it is owing to the severity of the weather, by which out-door work is stopped.

2. There is no necessity for this authority, as an authority, to take any steps in the matter at present. What distress exists is being met by private charity.

3. No register of cases necessary.

4. No suggestions at present.

GREAT OUSEBURN RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST AND NORTH RIDINGS).

Population (1891), 9,587. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *R. Paver-Crow*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no distress from want of employment in the area of this District Council in consequence of the severe frost. At a numerously attended meeting of the Board of Guardians on Monday last I pointedly asked the question from each of the Guardians, and the reply in every case was that there were no unemployed and no exceptional distress. I also made the same inquiry from the Relieving Officer and received the same reply.

The area covered by this District Council is almost entirely agricultural. The largest centre of population is Acomb, with a population of 2,181, the great majority of whom are employed at the works of the North Eastern Railway Company and are not affected by the weather.

HALESOWEN RURAL DISTRICT (WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 31,818. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *T. Wall*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

WITH the exception mentioned underneath, the exceptional distress in the district is due entirely to the continuance of the severe frost now being experienced, and on its departure the distress will be very much decreased. There are a number of voluntary agencies at work in the several parishes comprising the district, but I am unable to obtain either the total amount distributed, or the number of applicants, no account at all being kept of the latter.

The exception is the stoppage of the large ironworks at Corngreaves, of the New British Iron Company, the effects of which will be felt in the district for a long time.

HALSTEAD RURAL DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 10,813. Rateable Value (1892–93), £47,596.

Letter from *R. L. Hughes*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. GENERALLY speaking, there is no exceptional distress in this Union, and the number of applications for relief has not been above the average.

2. No extraordinary arrangements have been officially adopted, or appeared necessary; but in the Urban District of Halstead a voluntary relief committee has been formed, chiefly to deal with cases arising from the severity of the season. About 200 unemployed were relieved by this committee during the week ended 16th February.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

HEMSWORTH RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 14,631. Rateable Value (1892–93), £97,494.

Letter from *G. Rhodes*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE was no exceptional distress in this district. The chief industry of the district is coal mining, and the collieries, with one exception, are all working. The frost has stopped work at the stone quarries in Ackworth, and at the few limeworks and brickworks in the district, but, so far as I am aware, there is no exceptional distress resulting therefrom.

2, 3, 4. The questions contained in these heads of your Circular Letter do not, therefore, arise.

HOLYWELL RURAL DISTRICT (FLINT AND DENBIGH).

Population (1891), 29,843. Rateable Value (1892–93), £156,658.

Letter from *I. Hughes*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the Rural District other than is usually experienced during the winter months, owing to the interference of out-door work by the severe weather. The long and continued severe weather has delayed recommencement of work for a longer period than usual, and in two or three parts of the district the needs of the cases have been met by private donations and gifts in kind.

For the above reasons the Rural District Council have had no necessity to take steps to meet any distress which may have existed in the district, and no unemployed register has been maintained.

The foregoing observations apply only to the rural portion of the Holywell Union, and in those towns where exceptional distress does exist the information applied for will, no doubt, be furnished by the Mayor amd Chairmen of the Urban District Councils.

HUNSLET RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 6,120. Rateable Value (1892–93), £39,030.

Letter from *J. Farrer*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district. There are more than the usual number of men out of employment, owing to the severity of the weather, but their needs are met by private and voluntary assistance.

ISLES OF SCILLY RURAL DISTRICT.

Population (1891), 1,911. Rateable Value (1892–93), £2,515.

Letter from *E. N. V. Moyle*, Clerk of Select Vestry, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in these islands.

2. A piece of sea wall having been washed down during recent gales, the rebuilding has absorbed the few unemployed, viz., six labourers.

3. There is no register kept.

4. The Vestry cannot suggest anything further than what is mentioned in the Local Government Board's Circular* of 11th February 1895.

KEIGHLEY RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 5,756. Rateable Value (1892–93), £22,358.

Letter from *T. Clough*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

I THINK I am correct in saying that there is no exceptional distress in this district. So that there is no need of any extraordinary means to be taken in this matter.

KIDDERMINSTER RURAL DISTRICT (WORCESTER, SALOP, AND STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 9,951. Rateable Value (1892-93), £66,961.

Letter from *F. Burcher*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

IN the opinion of the Chairman there is not any exceptional distress in the district.
No unemployed register has been established.

KINGSTON RURAL DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 12,499. Rateable Value (1892-93), £139,947

Letter from 21st February 1895.

No exceptional distress.
Voluntary agencies suffice.
No occasion for unemployed register.

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*See * note on page 87.

KNIGHTON RURAL DISTRICT (RADNOR).

Population (1891), 4,824. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *Rev. H. B. C. Davies*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress, owing to the "severe weather."

2. We (*i.e.*, our authority) have hired a quarry, and have thus afforded work to able-bodied men, by giving them employment in stone-breaking for metalling the roads.

3. The Relieving Officers, and Master of Union-house, are empowered to give work to applicants, and to report at next board meeting.

4. In the towns of our district, Knighton and Presteign, a fair amount of private relief is afforded to our poor people, and for the present the usual sources of relief, I think, will be sufficient to cope with the wants of the district.

LANCHESTER RURAL DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 38,699. Rateable Value (1892–93), £161,239.

Letter from *W. Logan*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is very little distress in the district, and it is entirely due, or nearly so, to the present severe weather. A little is due to a colliery being laid in, and a little to slackness in the coal trade.

2. The public authority is doing nothing, nor has any application been made to it. A soup kitchen was opened at Bunnopfield on Monday, but it is only on a small scale.

3. No unemployed register has been or is intended to be kept.

4. The ordinary agency is sufficient to deal with the very small amount of distress.

LANGPORT RURAL DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 14,478. Rateable Value (1892–93), £103,688.

Letter from *F. W. Pinney*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress.

2. An extra 6*d.* towards coal has been granted by the District Council during the severe weather. Private collections have been made and public entertainments have been given in various parishes throughout the district towards the supply of coals and clothing to the most needy.

3. No unemployed register is kept for the purpose, not being required.

4. Various forms of local and private charities already existing are considered sufficient to cope with the present distress.

LEEK RURAL DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 13,998. Rateable Value (1892–93), £95,191.

Letter from *W. Challinor*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THE Council believe there are some cases of exceptional distress in the district arising out of the severity of the weather.

2. Nothing has been done by public authorities or by any organised voluntary agency to deal with any distress, but private individuals are assisting in this respect.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. Cases of exceptional distress caused through inability to labour on account of the weather should be dealt with by the Board of Guardians, after application by any person needing help.

LIMEHURST RURAL DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 9,003. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. L. Greaves*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THE exceptional distress in our district, due to the severe weather, has hitherto been met by application to the Guardians with out-door workers; the increase in number not very great.

2. Up to the present time, to meet such distress, the public authorities or voluntary agencies have not been necessitated to open relief or soup kitchens.

3. Not any unemployed register has been maintained or suggested.

4. Our district being almost entirely situated betwixt the Boroughs of Ashton-under-Lyne and Oldham, and the population largely employed in the cotton and iron trades, they are suffering much less than in an agricultural district from this severe weather, and refer to Guardians for relief.

LINTON RURAL DISTRICT (CAMBRIDGE).

Population (1891), 12,120. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *F. S. Milnes*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is rather more distress than usual in this district, which is chiefly due to the agricultural depression being so great that the farmers cannot employ the labour, and also owing to the continued frost, which has stopped nearly all kinds of work.

2. Voluntary relief is given in most of the parishes, but not to any great extent.

3. An unemployed register is not kept.

4. That discretion should be given to Boards of Guardians to relieve able-bodied men when thrown out of employment by exceptional circumstances, such as the present intensely cold weather.

LLANFYLLIN RURAL DISTRICT (MONTGOMERY).

Population (1891), ———. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *W. A. Pughe*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress prevails in this district.

2. The poor are relieved with coal, bread, and soup by local charities and voluntary agencies. The number relieved is unknown.

3. An unemployed register is not kept.

MALLING RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 24,751. Rateable Value (1892–93), £127,176.

Letter from *G. Phillips*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. EXCEPTIONAL distress at the present moment exists, due entirely to the severity of the weather.

2. Levelling ground on Light for the erection of an infectious hospital. Quarrying stone for future use on the roads by the Rural District Council. Voluntary relief agencies general.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. In this district, as soon as work can be resumed on the land, exceptional distress will disappear; hand labour peculiar to the cultivation of fruit and hops is much in arrear.

MARSTON SICCA RURAL DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 1,635. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Davenport*, Chairman, 21st Febreary 1895.

1. To my knowledge, there is no exceptional distress, otherwise than that due to want of out-door work, owing to the continued frost.

2. An augmentation of out-door relief was made by the Guardians last week.

3. No register of unemployed is kept; the great majority of labourers have allotments, and would be too glad to be able to go to work on them.

MITFORD AND LAUNDITCH RURAL DISTRICT (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 20,795. Rateable Value (1892–93), £136,199.

Letter from *W. H. Hubbard*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

THE Mitford and Launditch Union is the largest in Norfolk, entirely dependent on agriculture, except the Urban District of East Dereham, which is a prosperous town of about 6,000 inhabitants, situated nearly in the centre of the Union.

1. The applications for relief by old people have exceeded those of last year, and out-door relief has been granted with an additional 6*d.* per week to heads of families over 60 years of age for three months. During the severe weather, very few applications have been made by able-bodied labourers, in each case an order for the union-house has been given, but it is a very rare thing that the applicant has made use of it. The extra pauperism is principally due to the distressed state of agriculture and the long frost. The depression in agriculture is the cause of many old people being without work, but I think as the Spring advances there will be employment for all able and willing to work.

2. The present poor law system is quite able to deal with the question of pauperism in this Union, and no particular help has been given by voluntary agencies, further than what is done in most parishes by the clergy and principal residents.

3. No unemployed register has been kept, but the Guardians have been asked to make a return of the unemployed in their several parishes, and present such return at the next meeting of the Board on Monday, 25th February.

4. The only way of checking the increase of distress among all classes in this Union, is by passing such measures as will improve the circumstances of landlords and tenant farmers, who are suffering most terribly from the low prices of agricultural produce caused by foreign competition.

MORPETH RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 18,757. Rateable Value (1892–93), £145,960.

Letter from *G. Brumell*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is not supposed to be any exceptional distress within the district of this authority, except what is due to the severe weather, which now appears to be nearly over.

2. It is considered by this authority that the distress caused by the severe weather is being sufficiently met by voluntary agencies. Much of the larger number thus relieved will be at Morpeth, where, during the week ended Saturday the 16th February, the average daily number relieved was about 600.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to offer.

NARBERTH RURAL DISTRICT (PEMBROKE).

Population (1891), ———. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Thomas*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THERE is not, to the Chairman's knowledge, any exceptional distress in this district at present.

NEATH RURAL DISTRICT (GLAMORGAN AND BRECKNOCK).

Population (1891), 23,686. Rateable Value (1892–93), £110,964.

Letter from *A. S. Gardner*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. IN the Rural District of Neath there is no exceptional distress, as most of the works are still open.

2. Nothing is being done by the public authorities or the voluntary agencies in the Rural District for the relief of persons out of work. The District Council have accepted a tender for large sewerage works involving an expenditure of 13,000*l.*, and the contractor has agreed that he will, as far as possible, employ local labour. This will more than meet the requirements of the district as there will be sufficient employment for a very large number of persons.

3. No unemployed registers kept.

4. I have no suggestions to make except that the Local Government Board should expedite the formal delays in giving sanction to carrying out public works in this district.

NEWBURY RURAL DISTRICT (BERKS).

Population (1891), 10,454. Rateable Value, (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *A. R. Trell*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

THERE is, fortunately, no exceptional distress in this district; in fact, if anything, less than usual at this time of year.

NEWTON ABBOT RURAL DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 24,372. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Alsop*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. So far as the agricultural part of the district is concerned, the Council do not think there is any exceptional distress existing. Owing to the extreme severity of the weather there is some distress amongst those employed in the building trades in some of the towns of the district; and at Bovey Tracey, owing to local circumstances connected with the proprietorship of the pottery works, (at which many of the working population are engaged) there has been for some time a dearth of employment, and consequent distress. These circumstances, the authority believe, are of a temporary nature, and will shortly be remedied.

2. No steps have been taken by public authorities to meet distress within the district of the Council, so far as they are aware. But through the agency of the voluntary charitable organisation, soup kitchens have been established, and distributions of food and fuel have been made in most parts of the district. The Council are unable to supply information as to the numbers thus relieved.

3. There is no register of unemployed kept for the district.

4. The Council do not desire to make any suggestions. They hope, with the cessation of the severity of the weather, any exceptional distress existing in this district will be removed.

OXENDON RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 4,734. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *H. R. Rokeby*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no distress in our district except that which is due to the long frost. In most of the villages the labourers are all employed, but in some, there are a few men out of work, but no distress prevails beyond what can be met by private help.

PENRITH RURAL DISTRICT (CUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 13,595. Rateable Value (1892–93), £152,275.

Letter from *J. C. Toppin*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

No exceptional distress in district.

Nothing required to be done by public authorities or voluntary agencies.

No unemployed register kept.

No suggestions required

As Vice-Chairman of the Poor Law Board, I may state there has not been more than the usual number of applications for relief at the same time of year.

PONTEFRACT RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 10,650. Rateable Value (1892–93), £97,339.

Letter from *W. S. Wood*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. IT is gratifying to learn, as far as can be, that the distress has not been so seriously shown as in larger districts.

2. The applications to the Relieving Officer, up to the 16th instant, had not been greatly above the average of that type of cases, caused at this season by sickness or destitution; and in the parishes referred to private assistance appears

appears to have met the cases. In one of the parishes many men were out of work, but this seems to be attributed to the stoppage of colliery work, which, it is hoped, will be resumed.

3. No register of unemployed has been maintained, as it does not appear that any representations calling for such have come to the knowledge of the authorities.

4. From the above replies it will be seen that the Poor Law officers will be ready to act if an emergency arises, and, no doubt, this authority would also in that case be ready to take its part in suggesting remedies.

PORTSEA ISLAND RURAL DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 27. Rateable Value (1892–93), £456.

Letter from *S. R. Ellis*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THE total number of inhabitants in the district is only 20, and there does not appear to be any distress.

POTTERSPURY RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 5,930. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Chittle*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

LOCAL private charity has helped much to alleviate the distress, which increased very much during the late severe weather. A special meeting of the Guardians was called at 24 hours' notice, to consider what steps should be taken in real cases of distress requiring immediate assistance; it was ordered, that Overseers should be desired to relieve immediately on proof of distress, by giving help in kind. A scale was drawn out, the Overseer to be paid by Relieving Officer on his first visit, and the said officer report to Board. This was to include all cases of distress caused by want of work for old and young. Distress has increased gradually, owing to farmers not keeping men on as formerly, also because small farms are more in vogue now, the tenants and their families doing the work themselves. All that has been done has been what we considered the law now empowers us to do; suggestions for the future might be given, but unless the district met to consider such suggestions, it would perhaps not be right to give individual opinions. Stone-breaking for roads, and roads to be entirely supplied with stones so broken has been suggested, but although a partial relief, all could not do that work, as the supply of stone to be broken must be an extra expense to the county the first year, as it must be kept in stock ready against the emergency. Relieving Officer not being in every parish is one hardship; as those in distress cannot go a long distance in search of him; and the Overseer, as a rule, does not like running the risk of giving relief which may be ignored by the Guardians when reported at first Board day afterwards.

REDRUTH RURAL DISTRICT (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 19,546. Rateable Value (1892–93), £60,631.

Letter from *T. C. Peter*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district—

(*a*) Amongst miners caused by the low price of tin which has led to the closing of mines and lessening of hands.

(*b*) Amongst miners, tin-streamers, and other out-door labourers, consequent on the severity of the weather.

2. This Council has received a grant of 150*l.* from a miners' relief fund established some years ago in a former period of depression and not fully expended; they expect a further grant shortly. The Councillors for each parish have been formed into a committee with power to add to their number for the purpose of expending this money, and are undertaking road improvements, &c. As to voluntary agencies the Board have no means of knowing what they are doing. This authority having first met to consider the question on Friday last, is unable to give the daily average of cases relieved that you ask for.

3. An unemployed register is not kept.

4. This authority proposes to exhaust their present funds (received and expected from the miners' relief fund) before taking further steps.

RYE RURAL DISTRICT (EAST SUSSEX AND KENT).

Population (1891), 7,719. Rateable Value (1892-93), £51,649.

Letter from *K. Reeve*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no particular distress except that caused by the severe weather, and some want of employment caused by the severe distress amongst farmers owing to the very low prices of all agricultural produce, and their consequent inability to find money to employ necessary labour.

2. Nothing has been done.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. Let Government provide means to assist the thrifty working man to take and stock small holdings of from 10 to 20 acres.

SCARBOROUGH RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 7,499. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *W. O. Woodall*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district that is due to circumstances peculiar to the locality or the severe weather. The weather besides is now much milder.

SCULCOATES RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, EAST RIDING).

Population (1891), 8,786. Rateable Value (1892-93) £71,450.

Letter from *J. H. Fisher*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no doubt an exceptional amount of distress in this district, chiefly, if not solely, owing to the severe weather.

2. Voluntary agencies are at work relieving those distressed who have objections against applying for Poor Law relief.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make, most of the distress in the district will disappear upon the weather becoming milder.

SEDBERGH RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 4,040. Rateable Value (1892-93), £29,640.

Letter from *W. Robinson*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THE Chairman is not aware of any exceptional distress within his district.

SHEPPEY RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 3,065. Rateable Value (1892-93), £26,082.

Letter from *J. Hughes*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district, and no applications for relief have been received. An unemployed register is not kept.

SHERBURN RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, EAST RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,293. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *W. O. Woodall*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district that is due to circumstances peculiar to the locality or the severe weather. The weather besides is now much milder.

SOUTH WESTMORLAND RURAL DISTRICT (WESTMORLAND AND LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 20,858. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Holme*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

THERE is a certain amount of "exceptional" distress in my district from want of employment, partially owing to depression in trade and agriculture, but mainly arising temporarily through the severe weather.

Voluntary agencies are doing part in certain places to meet the distress, and the Board of Guardians are providing test employment in stone-getting and breaking for nearly 100 persons, in addition to the ordinary relief list.

There is no "unemployed register" maintained that is known.

If the Board of Guardians could be allowed legally to find employment for men temporarily out of work by contract or measure, it would be a great advantage to many who are willing to work but decline to become pauperised, and it would not disfranchise many who accept the work at present.

STOCKTON RURAL DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 11,990. Rateable Value (1892–93), £135,045.

Letter from *J. Robinson*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

NO exceptional distress exists within the district, except that due to the severity of the weather, so far as has come to their knowledge.

TADCASTER RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 25,977. Rateable Value (1892–93), £188,403.

Letter from *E. C. Brooksbank*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, except in some of the larger villages, and that owing solely to the severe weather.

2. The public authorities are taking no steps in the matter, but voluntary agencies are distributing relief.

3. An unemployed register is not necessary.

TENDRING RURAL DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 24,031. Rateable Value (1892–93), £125,564.

Letter from *A. J. W. Ward*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district, but there are, no doubt, many families in very straitened circumstances owing to the protracted frost.

2. A few families have been relieved by the Guardians in kind. The Chairman is unable to say whether there are any voluntary agencies.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The Chairman does not feel competent to offer any suggestions.

TINTWISTLE RURAL DISTRICT (CHESTER)

Population (1891), 2,576. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *B. Seymour*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, other than what is caused by the long-continued severe weather. The district contains a population of 2,576 only, and two of the three townships forming the district are entirely rural, having a population of 460 only. The remaining township with its large area, moorland, and farms, has no exceptional distress beyond what arises from the same cause, and no special action has been taken by public authorities, or by voluntary agencies, other than of a private nature, suggested by humane feelings on the part of the more fortunate residents of the respective localities.

No register of unemployed has up to the present been kept in this district.

Ulverston Rural District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 18,773. Rateable Value (1892–93), £159,090.

Letter from *W. R. Nail*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

The Rural District of Ulverston does not embrace Ulverston, Dalton, and Arkam, and, therefore, the distress, owing to the great depression in the iron trade, is not felt so much in the Rural as in the Urban Districts. The slate quarrymen in the north of our district have been fairly well employed, but some of them are out of work through the excessive cold and frost. The miners about Kirkby, Pennington, and Urswick are not so well paid as they were, and a few are out of work. The sand fishermen in the south of our district, particularly in Flookburgh near Cark are (at least some of them), in great distress, owing to the frost, and also, as some of them say, owing to the recent fishery regulations not permitting them to set their nets for flukes near the streams running across the sands as they used to be able to do, although the blocks of ice would prevent that now, even if the fishery regulations did not prevent it. Several stonemasons, painters, &c. are out of work, and always are at this time of year when it is frosty. But, as a whole, I consider (with these exceptions), there is no exceptional distress in our Rural District, which may be also inferred by the annexed statistics.

Private assistance has been rendered in some cases, but no exceptional agencies.

No unemployed register is kept.

Ulverston Union.

	Number Receiving Out-door Relief.		Number in Workhouses.		Vagrants Relieved.	
	1895.	1894.	1895.	1894.	1895.	1894.
4th week of Quarter	881	897	216	233	45	54
5th „ „	882	883	225	242	55	45
6th „ „	880	897	229	240	24	67
7th „ „	931	880	226	234	25	47
8th „ „	912	900	227	230	28	85

Uppingham Rural District (Rutland).

Population (1891), 7,212. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *A. J. Fludyer*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

I beg to state that there is not any exceptional distress in this district and that the ordinary distress which exists is due to the severity of the weather.

Uxbridge Rural District (Middlesex).

Population (1891), 14,439. Rateable Value (1892–93), £95,884.

Letter from *C. Woodbridge*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in this district, except that caused solely by the severe weather, which has necessitated the Grand Junction Canal and the brickfields being closed. Directly the severe weather ceases they will be opened and the distress will cease. There are now 55 able-bodied men at work in the stoneyard of the Union in consequence of the weather.

2. Nothing has been done by the public authorities, as with the exception of the brickfields and the workers on the canal, and a factory at Yiewsley, the district is chiefly agricultural, but subscriptions have been raised by private persons in the various parishes for the temporary relief of those requiring it.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

I may add, that at the meeting of the Guardians held on the 1st February they had a smaller number of applications for relief than they had had for some years at that period of the winter.

Watford Rural District (Hertford).

Population (1891), 21,906. Rateable Value (1892–93), £134,940.

Letter from *H. M. Turner*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. Until the occurrence of the recent severe weather no exceptional distress has been experienced in the above district, but in the course of last week it was found that about 50 men in the Parish of Bushey Rural and about the same number in the Parish of Rickmansworth were in urgent need of employment. The Board of Guardians, anxious not to put in operation the machinery of the labour test, referred the matter to the District Council and they have appointed special committees with powers to deal with the matter in the parishes above named.

In the Parish of Bushey Rural an arrangement by which the Surveyor of Highways found employment at a gravel pit and such employment was made and is still proceeding. In the Parish of Rickmansworth neither the highway authority nor the Parish Council could provide any employment and therefore the District Council, acting as they conceive in the spirit of your Circular Letter * of the 11th instant, opened a gravel pit on Tuesday morning to provide employment for those who needed it. No register of the unemployed has yet been started.

*See note * on page 87.

WATH RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,334. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Wilkinson*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no distress in this district of an exceptional character arising from the want of employment or any other cause.

WEST ASHFORD RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 8,204. Rateable Value (1892–93), £67,534.

Letter from *A. Brown*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is no very exceptional distress in this district, which is purely agricultural; and what there is is partly owing to the very severe weather of the last month, and partly to the depressed state of agriculture, which prevents farmers employing as many hands in the winter months as they were in the habit of doing in better times.

2. The public authority (Board of Guardians) has asked the sanction of your Board to allow relief in kind to be given to able-bodied men who may be in temporary distress through want of employment; but only a few cases of this nature have come under the notice of the authority so far. In such severe weather it is impossible for any public authority to find work for all who are unemployed. When the weather breaks there will be ample employment, work having been suspended so long.

3. No register is maintained.

4. This is a most difficult question, and I am unable to say what would be a permanent remedy beyond an improvement in agriculture; and I think that temporary and urgent distress might be dealt with by giving increased powers to Boards of Guardians enabling them to grant out-relief without, however, entailing the stigma of pauperism upon the recipients, who would, of course, also retain their civil rights.

WEST DEAN RURAL DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 11,697. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *S. J. Elsom*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

So far as is known but little exceptional distress exists in this district. Owing to the protracted frost, the quarrymen and some other out-door workers have been unable to follow their employment. As a consequence, there is some destitution. This, however, is limited in range, and likely to be only temporary. Voluntary efforts are being made to provide for the really necessitous cases, and it is believed this will be sufficient without having recourse to any extraordinary measures.

WIGTON RURAL DISTRICT (CUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 12,672. Rateable Value (1892–93), £130,579.

Letter from *W. Donald*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. I DO not think there is great distress in this Rural District, although, of course, there is just at present a cessation of work to a certain extent, owing to the severity of the weather.

2. There has not been, at any rate in my opinion, any necessity to make any special provision for the poor in the Rural District, nor have any agencies been at work to my knowledge.

4. I have no suggestions to offer.

WIMBORNE AND CRANBORNE RURAL DISTRICT (DORSET).

Population (1891), 13,950. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. T. Homer*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THE best answer I can give to this question is an extract which appears in our minutes of 18th January 1895, being reply to a letter from Mr. Baldwyn Fleming, your Inspector, viz.:—

"There is no exceptional distress except lack of employment more marked."

This is due in some respects to the depression in agriculture, and also to the severe weather.

2. Some few able-bodied men and their families are being relieved in kind by the Guardians. In Wimborne a relief fund has been started and warmly taken up, while in the villages the wealthier inhabitants are helping to meet the additional distress. I am not able to furnish you with any daily number relieved for the week ended 16th February 1895, but I do not think it would amount to any great number.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make. The distress is being relieved fairly well in the district.

WINCANTON RURAL DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 18,251. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *F. W. Lancaster*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. OWING to the severe weather men are out of work in the larger parishes of this Union.

2. They are being relieved by our Relieving Officer and through voluntary help and private relief committees formed in the parishes.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

WINCHCOMB RURAL DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER AND WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 9,232. Rateable Value (1892-93), £67,105.

Letter from *J. H. Stephens*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. A GREAT many persons are, and have been, out of employment for want of work through the severe weather. Only five applications have been made to the Board from able-bodied persons for out-door relief. There being plenty of room in the workhouse relief there was offered but refused.

2. There is no public authority here but this Board, and the want of employment has been met by private subscriptions. Number assisted by such in the fortnight ended the 16th instant was :—

By distribution of coals, about 130.
By bread and soup, every other day, 100.
Children free dinners, every day, about 120.

3. There is no unemployed register.

4. To give the Board of Guardians power to give relief in kind to able-bodied persons during distress occasioned by severe weather.

WITNEY RURAL DISTRICT (OXFORD).

Population (1891), 18,829. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *R. Baker*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

No exceptional cases of distress have come under the notice of the Guardians beyond those that usually occur in severe winters.

WOBURN RURAL DISTRICT (BEDFORD).

Population (1891), 9,295. Rateable Value (1892-93), £55,959.

Letter from *J. Crouch*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

IT was decided on the 15th February, by the District Council, that in the Woburn District no exceptional distress from want of employment exists. The said council will not meet again till 1st March, but I have no doubt the opinion of the members of the council will be the same. My own individual opinion is that the labouring population in this immediate neighbourhood were never so fully employed in the depth of winter as during the present winter, owing to various causes, among others the following :—

1. The population has been steadily decreasing, many young men having left the villages, some having bettered their position by so doing ; some, on the other hand, having gone to increase the number of the unemployed in the large towns.

2. His Grace the Duke of Bedford is employing far more labour in many directions than was the case on the same estate 10 years ago.

3. His Grace has kept going relief works on which any fairly-conducted man out of employment can obtain temporary work at sufficiently remunerative wages to enable him to live and keep his family.

4. Practically, all really reliable agricultural labourers are in regular employment at a minimum wage of 12*s.* per week, those working for a few hours on Sunday getting 14*s.* It will be understood that I only speak of my own rural district.

WOODSTOCK RURAL DISTRICT (OXFORD).

Population (1891), 11,449. Rateable Value (1892–93), £75,450.

Letter from *A. G. Higgs*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THE Rural District Council are not aware that there is such exceptional distress in this district as to demand any action on their part.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

BATTERSEA PARISH.

Population (1891), 150,508. Rateable Value (1892–93), £774,523.

Letter from *W. Davies*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. EXCEPTIONAL distress prevails in this parish, and it is owing to the severe weather.

2. A large number of men are being engaged by the Vestry daily with the object of immediately relieving the distress, the average daily number of men engaged by the Vestry during the week ended the 16th February being 38 men. The number of men employed daily by the Vestry from the 23rd January to the 7th February, however, averaged 315. These figures are in addition to the ordinary staff in the employment of the Vestry, which averages 416 men.

3. An unemployed register is maintained, with satisfactory results.

4. Men are deterred from applying to the Guardians for temporary relief in consequence of the probability of political disqualification, and of surrendering their independence, and the suffering is thus largely intensified. I think the time has arrived when the question should be dealt with as a national one, and that work should either be found for the unemployed or extended relief afforded in times of great distress, without disqualifying the applicant. The Vestry are naturally appealed to by the working classes, and it is inequitable that the locality should be obliged to bear the burden.

BETHNAL GREEN PARISH.

Population (1891), 129,132. Rateable Value (1892–93), £426,499.

Letter from *R. Voss*, Vestry Clerk, 21st February 1895.

I AM instructed by the sub-committee appointed for the purpose to state that it is not considered that the distress this year is greater than last year (except the exceptional conditions caused by the frost). Last year the Vestry commenced a register of unemployed on the 6th October; this year the need to do so did not arise till the 11th January. All building and allied trades, all paving and road-making works, are suspended by reason of the frost.

2. The Vestry has no reliable information with regard to what is being done by the guardians, or by voluntary agencies in the parish. The Vestry is the only other public authority in the parish, and what the Vestry has done appears in the reply to Inquiry No. 3.

3. The Vestry has established a register for men seeking work. It was commenced on the 11th January, and up to and including the 16th February, 1,309 names have been received. A similar register was kept last year, and of the 1,309 registered this year 395 were on last year's register. This feature also occurs with the registers 1892–93 and 1893–94. Out of a total of 1,296 registered, 1893–94, 463 had been registered the previous year.

From 11th January to 16th February, inclusive, the Vestry have found work, in addition to men employed on their regular staff, equal to 3,579 days, and the men have been paid at the rate of 6*d.* per hour. The details showing the number of men employed daily are sent herewith.

4. The parish of Bethnal Green is, with the exception of the parks and open spaces, closely covered with houses, and most of the suggestions made in the Circular Letter* of the Board of the 11th instant are inapplicable to Bethnal Green. The Vestry have in hand several paving and drainage works (some commenced), but the Vestry have been compelled to delay the works on account of the frost. These works will, when resumed, provide employment for a considerable number of men, but not of the class who register as "unemployed." A classification has been made of the persons on the register, showing the following particulars:—Age, trade or occupation, married, single, or widower, number of children, whether employed during previous winter by the Vestry on relief works. These particulars to Saturday, the 16th February, have been tabulated. The accompanying list shows the trades or occupations of those whose names are upon the register, with the total of each calling.

The Vestry have endeavoured to engage, in respect of the works undertaken to relieve distress, only persons who are resident in the parish. The system of registration, followed by the invitation through the post in the afternoon for the next day's work, in a measure prevents people not entitled to require parochial aid from the parish of Bethnal Green obtaining wages for relief work, and also to some extent people from leaving harder, or less well-paid engagements. It might be well if all districts adopted some similar precautions.

It is considered that in this and other closely-populated parishes the burden of the cost of relief works falls with undue severity on such parishes. It is suggested that under a scheme, formed by the Local Government Board, or some central representative body, the expenditure in relief works throughout the metropolis might, with due regard to the wages spent, and the benefit in each locality received from labour, be apportioned rateably over the metropolitan authorities.

(LIST

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* *See* note * on page 87.

(List of Number of Men employed daily, before referred to.)

Date. 1.	Day. 2.	Number of Post Cards sent to Men offering a Day's Work. 3.	Number of Men who responded. 4.	Additional Men engaged. 5.	Total Number of Men engaged. 6.
1895:					
January 11	Friday	55	48	—	48
„ 12	Saturday	55	51	—	51
„ 14	Monday	55	47	—	47
„ 15	Tuesday	55	48	—	48
„ 16	Wednesday	55	50	—	50
„ 17	Thursday	50	44	—	44
„ 18	Friday	50	44	—	44
„ 19	Saturday	65	57	—	57
„ 21	Monday	63	58	—	58
„ 22	Tuesday	67	56	194	250
„ 23	Wednesday	200	171	—	171
„ 24	Thursday	100	91	—	91
„ 25	Friday	65	58	—	58
„ 26	Saturday	77	66	—	66
„ 28	Monday	65	60	190	250
„ 29	Tuesday	210	177	—	177
„ 30	Wednesday	100	87	—	87
„ 31	Thursday	100	85	—	85
February 1	Friday	254	214	211	425
„ 2	Saturday	251	219	152	371
„ 4	Monday	250	217	—	217
„ 5	Tuesday	112	99	—	99
„ 6	Wednesday	75	68	243	311
„ 7	Thursday	100	87	—	87
„ 8	Friday	99	88	2	90
„ 9	Saturday	50	43	—	43
„ 11	Monday	50	48	—	48
„ 12	Tuesday	50	43	—	43
„ 13	Wednesday	50	40	—	40
„ 14	Thursday	50	42	—	42
„ 15	Friday	50	41	—	41
„ 16	Saturday	50	40	—	40
		2,978	2,587	992	3,579

Mem.—These figures are in addition to the regular staff of workmen.

(List

(List of Trades before referred to.)

Boot Trade:		
Lasters	20	
Finishers	25	
Rivetters	2	
Clickers	2	
Rough stuff cutters	7	
Slipper makers	6	
Cordwainers	8	
Children's shoe makers	3	
Repairers	3	
Boot makers	7	
Sew rounds	12	
		95
Bricklayers	3	
Ditto jobbing	2	
		5
Bonnet shape blocker		2
Brush makers		1
Brush borers		1
Boiler makers		1
Bakers		6
Bill posters		1
Bellows makers		2
Bat makers		1
Buhl cutter		1
Bamboo worker		1
Box maker		1
Barber		1
Bookbinders		2
Bottlers		2
Bottle washer		1
Blacksmiths		2
Blacksmith hammerman		1
Cabinet makers (various)		39
Carvers		6
Colour grinders		4
Carmen		107
Costers		29
Carpenters		5
Clerks		1
Couch makers		2
Confectioners		2
Chair makers		12
Cycle fitter		1
Clock maker		1
Cornice pole maker		1
Cook		1
Cigar makers		2
Cork cutters		2
Coopers		2
Drugman		1
Dealer, general (*see* Costers)		5
Dryers		3
Disinfecting fluid maker		1
Engine driver and stoker		1
Engineers		2
French polishers		12
Fruiterer		1
Fitter (hot water)		1
Farriers		4
Fishing rod maker		1
Fish curer		1
Furniture japanners		2
Fishmongers		2
Glass blowers		5
Gardener		1
Gun smiths		2
Glass cutter		1
Gasfitters		2
Glass embosser		1
Groom		1
Glass beveller		1
Horse keepers		10
Hawkers		17
Handyman		1
Helmet maker		1
House decorator (*see* Painters)		1
Housebreakers		3
Iron safe makers		3
Ironworker		1
Labourers:		
Bricklayers		155
Brass founders		1
Blacksmiths		5

Labourers—continued.		
Casual		229
Carpenters		2
Coopers		1
Dock		83
Engineers		3
Coach painter		1
General		50
Gas fitters		1
Glass blowers		1
Percha factory		1
Ironfounders		4
Painters		9
Plasterers		2
Paviors		5
Printers		11
Plumbers		3
Slater		1
Stone masons		4
Soap factory		1
Saw mill		4
Wheelwright		1
Marble masons		3
Mineral water trade		1
Marble polishers		6
Mat makers		4
Matchbox stamper		1
Milkmen		2
Mattress makers		2
Musician		1
Navvies		26
Newsvendor		1
Optician		1
Paper stainers		5
Picture frame makers		2
Painters		58
Porters:		
Light	13	
Railway	3	
Market	3	
Deal	8	
Timber	8	
Kitchen	3	
Heavy	4	
		42
Printers (litho.)		2
Potmen		13
Packing case makers		10
Packers		8
Pipe makers		2
Pastry cook		1
Plasterers		3
Printer		1
Picture frame maker		1
Platelayer		1
Rag sorters		2
Rope makers		5
Rammersmen		4
Stokers		3
Stationers' warehousemen		7
Stick dressers		3
Sugar boilers		2
Slaters		2
Silk spinners		2
Sawyers		2
Seamen		2
Turners (wood)		2
Traveller		1
Typefounder		1
Twine finishers		2
Twine spinners		2
Trunk makers		1
Tobacco stripper		1
Tailor		1
Umbrella frame maker		1
Watchman		1
Wood chopper		1
Weavers		7
Willow cutters		2
Wheelwright's smiths		3
Waterman		1
Waiter		1
Wine cellarman		1

Hampstead Parish.

Population (1891), 68,416. Rateable Value (1892–93), £706,536.

Letter from *A. P. Johnson*, Vestry Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. The Vestry are of opinion that there is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. The stoneyard has been opened to the unemployed, and the average daily number thus relieved is 15; also the chief voluntary agency for relieving distress in the district is the Charity Organization Society.

3. No unemployed register is kept by the Vestry.

4. The Vestry have no suggestions to make on the question of relieving distress.

Plumstead Parish.

Population (1891), 52,436. Rateable Value (1892–93), £181,416.

Letter from *E. Hughes*, Vestry Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress among building trades, waterside men, field hands; also due to a number of men who were brought into the parish by the building of the Brook Hospital at Shooters Hill, the majority of whom, owing to the prolonged frost, have been thrown out of employment.

2. During the present winter an aggregate number of 621 men have been employed on snow sweeping. In the last fortnight one day's work has been given to some 204 men in order to relieve the unemployed generally. It is understood that the Guardians of Woolwich Union have assisted about 1,000 cases in addition to the above. Private Relief Societies have also assisted in relieving the exceptional distress, amongst which are the following:—Plumstead Relief Society, Woolwich Soup Kitchen, Radical Club Relief Society, Conservative Club Soup Kitchen, St. Mark's Mission Relief Fund, Literary and Debating Society Dinner Fund, and Parochial Bread Charity. With regard to the week ended Saturday, 16th February, it is estimated that the number relieved would be 700, exclusive of the Guardians.

3. An unemployed register is kept, but cannot be fully worked for want of funds.

4. A grant of money would enable this Vestry to add a like amount, and employ men out of work on local improvements.

St. Saviour's District Board of Works.

Population (1891), 27,177. Rateable Value (1892–93), £344,222.

Letter from *W. H. Atkins*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

I am directed to forward a copy of a report by the Paving and General Purposes Committee, which has been adopted by the Board.

(Report of Paving and General Purposes Committee above referred to.)

We beg to report that we have had laid before us a Circular received from the Local Government Board, dated 11th February 1895, on the subject of the unemployed, which appears to be a repetition of those received on previous occasions.

In that Circular it is suggested that this Board should assist the unemployed by providing—

"1. Work which will not involve the stigma of pauperism.

"2. Work which all can perform whatever may have been their previous avocations.

"3. Work which does not compete with that of other labourers at present in employment."

And further sets forth that—

"These works may be of the following kinds among others:—

"Cleansing of streets not usually undertaken by local authorities.

"Laying out and paving of new streets, &c.

"Paving of unpaved streets, and making of footpaths in country roads.

"Spade husbandry on sewage farms.

"Laying out of open spaces, recreation grounds, new cemeteries, or disused burial grounds.

"Providing or extending sewerage works and works of water supply."

We would point out among other impracticabilities that of all the classes of work above enumerated not one can be carried out in frosty weather, which is the season in which the greatest number of men are out of employment, and also that this Board, and probably most other similar bodies, have a large number of workmen who carry on many of the works suggested above in suitable weather, but who are now enduring considerable hardships through the frost preventing their working, and who will need all the employment that can be given to them when the weather breaks.

Secondly, much of the above work requires skilled labour of its peculiar kind, and all of it much physical effort, and is, therefore, totally unfit for those whose infirmities prevent their doing continuous laborious work, and who form such a large proportion of the unemployed in periods of depression, and the employment of men who are unable to do the work allotted to them, not only partakes of inhumanity, but their exposure in the public thoroughfares will be likely in some cases to arouse indignation, and in others promote reactionary feelings in those ratepayers who notice their incapacity.

With

With reference to the clause relating to loans, the Committee would remind the Board of their unfortunate experience with regard to the underground convenience in the borough. This work was put in hand in November 1893, before the plans were complete, in order to find employment, when the weather permitted, during the worst season of the year; and, although a large number could not be employed on the work, yet the proportion to our population was equal to giving 4,000 extra men work throughout the Metropolis, or providing food and warmth for about 20,000 persons. Sanction for a loan was applied for to the Local Government Board on 6th December 1893, but no Inspector was sent to the district until 28th March 1894, and the sanction was not obtained until 10th April 1894. As the Board does not keep large balances, considering that the ratepayers are the proper custodians of their own money, the greatest possible inconvenience was experienced in finding money to carry on the regular works of the Board.

When this Circular was first issued the Local Government Board doubtless considered that Vestries and District Boards could find work in the direction suggested, but very slight enquiry, at least as regards the Metropolis, would have dissipated that idea long since.

Altogether disregarding the inferred lack of sympathy with the unemployed on the part of Vestries and District Boards, which the continued issue of this Circular implies, and the unpleasantnesses, from which these bodies have suffered when in response thereto employment was not forthcoming, we feel that to arouse illusory hopes in the minds of those bowed down by suffering and privation, by leading them to think that relief in the form of employment would ensue in the manner suggested by this Circular, when only disappointment could result, is adding another and most acute sorrow to the almost unbearable burdens of too many of our fellow citizens.

We therefore recommend that this Board should most respectfully represent to the Local Government Board that while they (the Board) would only be most grateful for any practical proposals or suggestions which would tend towards the relief of the unemployed, they consider those contained in the present Circular utterly futile—at least as regards the Metropolis—and recommend its withdrawal. We also recommend that a copy of this report be sent to the Member for West Southwark, and that copies be sent to the Vestries and District Boards of the Metropolis.

(signed) *Henry J. Coles*,
Chairman of the Committee.

Offices—Emerson-street, Bankside, Southwark, S.E.,
12 February 1895.

Shoreditch Parish.

Population (1891), 124,009. Rateable Value (1892-93), £682,476.

Letter from *H. M. Robinson*, Vestry Clerk, 20th February 1895.

The Vestry are doing all they properly can to alleviate the distress existing amongst the unemployed, but the amount of work at their disposal is utterly inadequate to deal with the exceptional distress which exists in this district.

II. COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Birkenhead County Borough.

Population (1891), 99,857. Rateable Value (1892-93), £476,659.

Letter from *T. Shaw*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

1. There is some amount of distress in the district, and on account of the exceptional severity of the weather the distress has been more than usual at this time of the year.

2. Employment is found for all applicants at the town's yard in breaking stones for macadam roads. Good and efficient relief is being afforded thorugh numerous church and mission agencies in the borough, and grants in aid of their work are being made from a special fund subscribed by the public for the purpose. It is impossible to give any reliable figures as to the daily number relieved.

3. An unemployed register is not kept.

4. I have no suggestions to make, or any fresh scheme to propose for the relief of distress.

Burnley County Borough.

Population (1891), 87,016. Rateable Value (1892-93), £288,573.

Letter from *C. Mitchell*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

1. There exists in this borough exceptional distress, but such distress is almost entirely due to the severe weather. From inquiries I have made I am glad to be able to inform you that although the staple industry of this district—cotton weaving—is in a very depressed state, the mills and weaving sheds in the borough are, generally speaking, fully employed.

2. The fact that many out-door workers have one or more members of their families employed in the cotton mills or weaving sheds reduces to some extent the distress which is undoubtedly felt among that class. The Local Authority, upon the occasion of the recent heavy fall of snow, not only employed the regular staff of scavengers, the park labourers, and masons, paviors and drainers usually engaged by the Highways Department and unable to follow their ordinary work by reason of the frost, but also as many men as applied, in the work of removing the snow from the public streets. There was an average of 36 additional carters and 160 additional labourers daily employed for a week in that work. The work, however had entirely come to an end before the week mentioned in your second inquiry. You are, of course, aware that the same causes which prevent persons in the building trades and other out-door workers from follow-

ing their occupations also throw out of work persons in the employ of the Corporation who are engaged in manual husbandry in the parks, and as masons, paviors and drainers in the streets. The Local Authority have, however, done all that could reasonably be done to provide work for such men, and 63 have been employed for the last week or two in clearing the paved bed of the rivers running through the town, and have taken therefrom 810 loads of gravel. Other men in the employ of the Corporation who have been prevented from following their usual work have been employed in carting and storing ashes for next winter's use on the roads when slippery through frost.

I convened a meeting on the 13th instant for the purpose of considering what steps were necessary to relieve the distress among out-door workers, and the following resolution was passed :—

"That this meeting is of opinion that there are sufficient philanthropic agencies in the town to deal with the present distress among out-door workers, but that additional funds are required to assist them ; that the Mayor be requested to invite subscriptions in aid thereof ; and that a Committee be appointed to consult with the Mayor as to the disposal of such funds as he may be entrusted with."

Steps were immediately taken by the town missionaries, the clergy, and ministers of various denominations and other charitably disposed persons to open soup kitchens in various parts of the town, and I enclose a statement showing the days in the week ended the 16th February on which the soup kitchens were opened, and the number of persons relieved thereby.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. Being of opinion that the distress in this borough is of a temporary nature, I think the means above described are sufficient for the purpose of relieving such distress.

(Statement of the average number of Persons relieved daily, above referred to.)

	Dates in Week ended 16th February on which Relief given.	Number Relieved at Soup Kitchen.		Families Relieved at Home.
		Adults.	Children.	
Rehoboth	February 15th and 16th	—	110	30
St. Mary's	February 11th to 16th	280	175	40
St. Matthew's	February 14th, 15th and 16th	—	—	85
Mr. J. Grimshaw's Keirby Brewery	February 11th to 16th	230	—	230
Wood Top School	February 14th and 15th	—	—	80
Lane Bridge Mission Room	February 14th, 15th and 16th	100*	100*	—
Whittlefield Mission Room	February 15th and 16th	—	70	—

* Not consumed on premises.

Devonport County Borough.

Population (1891), 54,803. Rateable Value (1892-93), £112,720.

Letter from *J. J. E. Venning*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There has not been any exceptional distress in the district, due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, but in consequence of the long continuance of severe weather, artizans and labourers, in a limited number, have been thrown out of work.

2. With a view to assist the necessitous poor in this severe weather, a relief fund has been opened for public subscriptions, by means of which the funds of the charitable institutions in the town have been supplemented, the relief being administered by small committees.

3. No register of the unemployed is maintained.

4. The Mayor has no suggestions to make.

GLOUCESTER COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 39,444. Rateable Value (1892-93), £150,977.

Letter from *G. S. Blakeway*, Town Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is and has been exceptional distress in this city, mainly arising from the following causes:—

(*a.*) The flooding by the River Severn of some of the low-lying portions of the city.

(*b.*) The unusually severe weather, which has thrown many persons out of employment at a time when the number of persons employed at the principal works in the city has been below the average owing to slackness of trade.

2. The Corporation have employed a number of persons on special works, such as removing snow, cleansing streets, and stone-breaking; also on the widening of two roads, &c. The men so employed have at times numbered as many as 230 above the number usually employed by the Corporation. The Mayor also opened a special relief fund, the contributions to which already amount to about 730*l.*, and tickets for coal, bread, groceries, and soup are being distributed in connection with house-to-house visitation by carefully organised committees, whose chief secretary estimates that about 1,500 different houses or families received relief during the week ended Saturday, 16th February. In addition to these, several other and more private relief agencies have been rendering much assistance to those in need; but it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which relief has been granted in this manner.

3. No unemployed register has been kept, but notices have been posted at the Guildhall when the Corporation have been able to provide additional employment.

MANCHESTER COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 505,368. Rateable Value (1892-93), £2,844,086.

Letter from *A. E. Lloyd*, Lord Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is at the present time exceptional distress, which I attribute mainly to the unusual and prolonged severity of the weather.

2. I have issued an advertisement asking for public subscriptions to relieve the distress. In response up to the present time, the sum of about 900*l.* has been subscribed, which is being applied in accordance with the terms stated in the advertisement. There are a number of Local Relief Committees formed in various parts of the city, collecting funds and dispensing relief. All the Parade Rooms attached to the Divisional Police Stations of the city are being utilised as soup kitchens under the auspices of the Local Relief Committees. Every assistance is rendered by the police. A statement giving the details asked for is enclosed herewith.

3. I have further to state that no official register of unemployed has been maintained, nor do I consider the same to be necessary.

4. The measures adopted for the relief of the distress as above detailed, and now in operation, will in my opinion prove sufficient to cope with the present exceptional distress, and I have no further suggestion to offer. I may say that the Manchester Corporation have given as much employment as they could in clearing the streets of snow by engaging extra hands from among the unemployed, the maximum number being 1,500.

(Statement above referred to).

Relief of Unemployed through inclemency of Weather during Week ended 16th February 1895.

Number of Voluntary Agencies.	Daily Average Number Relieved.
29	7,611

Voluntary Agencies instituted since 16th February 1895.

Number of Voluntary Agencies.	Daily Average Number Relieved.
42	12,337

A Division, 21 February 1895.

Names of Voluntary Agencies and Number relieved daily.	
The District Provident Charity Organization Society, 6, Queen-street	140
Labour Church, 6, St. John's-parade, Deansgate	1,500
Wood-street Mission Soup Kitchen	1,000
City-road Mission Hall Soup Kitchen	300
Central Hall, Oldham-street	1,000
Total	3,940

T. Meade, Superintendent.

B Division, 21 February 1895.

Mr. Superintendent John Smith reports that during the week ended Saturday, 16th February 1895, the following Voluntary Agencies were at work in the B Division relieving the distressed poor, viz.:—

Cons. No.	Agency.	Place where Relief is given.	No. of Meals Supplied Daily.	Date of Commencement.	Time of Day Supplied.	Remarks.
1	Mr. Jewitt and friends	Gay-street Ragged School.	135	16 February	7 P.M.	Soup & bread.
2	Mr. F. Cawley, printer	Print Works, Bottomley Side.	200	13 February	11 A.M.	Do.
3	John Taylor, Esq., J.P.	Brookdale Hall, Droylesden-road.	100	10 February	Mid-day	Do.
4	Mr. A. Cave, butcher	272, Waterloo-road	100	11 February	Evening	Meat & bread.
5	Mr. J. Robinson, butcher	593, Cheetham Hill-road	120	11 February	Mid-day	Soup & bread.

The following Voluntary Agencies for Relieving Distress have also been established since the 16th instant:—

Cons. No.	Agency.	Place where Relief is given.	No. of Meals Supplied Daily.	Date of Commencement.	Time of Day Supplied.	Remarks.
1	A number of friends	Queen-street Ragged School, Newton Heath.	180	18 February	7 P.M.	Soup & bread.
2	Friends	Wesleyan Schools, Oldham-road, N.H.	170	18 February	Mid-day	Do.
3	Church party	Jubilee Schools, Harpurhey.	350	18 February	Evening	Do.
4	Church party	St. Peter's Schools, Barnes Green.	300	18 February	Evening	Do.
5	Mr. L. K. Shaw and friends.	Boys' Refuge, Strangeways.	125	18 February	Mid-day	Bread, butter, and cocoa.
6	Members and friends	Conservative Club, Harpurhey.	40 Tickets, each value 2*s.* 6*d.*	18 February	Evening	Clothing, coal, bread, &c.
7	Mr. J. Newman, butcher	15, Rochdale-road, Blackley.	110	20 February	Evening	Soup for one night only.
8	Mr. W. Ramsbottom, baker.	13, Rochdale-road, Blackley.	110	20 February	Evening	Bread for one night only.

On

On the 20th instant a meeting was held in the Churnet Street Public Hall, a Mr. McFarlane in the chair, supported by a number of magistrates, councillors, ministers of religion, and doctors, to devise the best means of alleviating the distress in the district.

A committee was formed to select the most convenient places for distributing free meals, and the meeting then adjourned until mid-day on the 21st instant.

C. Division, 21st February, 1895.

1. A return showing "What is being done to meet the distress now prevailing from want of employment, by voluntary agencies, and the average daily number relieved by each of the agencies during the week ended Saturday, the 16th February 1895." Food, clothing, and fuel were distributed to an average daily number of 132 persons, by each of 17 agencies.

2. "Also the number, if any, of voluntary agencies that have since been organised, and the average daily number relieved by each." Food, clothing, and fuel, are being distributed to an average daily number of 242 persons by each of 26 agencies.

Wm. Wild, Inspector, for Superintendent.

D. Division.

List of places at which voluntary agencies exist to meet the distress prevailing from want of employment, and the number of cases relieved by each:—

1. Rev. Mr. Finney Platt, Church opened 7th February; daily average of cases during week ended 16th February, 150. Soup, bread, coke, and coal.

2. Mrs. Wilkinson, Foxlow House, Wilmslow-road, Rusholme, opened 18th instant; daily average, 20 cases. Soup and bread.

3. Conservative Club, Wilmslow-road, Rusholme, opened 19th instant; three days per week; average number of cases daily, 60. Soup, bread, coal, and coke.

4. Congregational Church, Wilmslow-road, Rusholme, opened on the 18th instant; average number of case daily, 120. Soup and bread.

5. Mundy-street Mission Room, Stockport-road, opened on the 18th instant; twice per week for soup, bread, and groceries; daily for coke and coal. Average number of cases daily, 60.

6. Ivy Schools, Lime Grove, Longsight, opened on the 18th instant; three days per week. Soup, bread, groceries, coal, and coke. Average number of cases daily, 152.

7. Wesleyan Chapel, George-street, Hulme, opened six weeks since; average number of cases daily during the week ended 16th February, 43; current week, 120 daily. Food, clothing, coal, and coke.

8. Hulme Distress Fund, Hulme Town Hall, opened 18th instant; average number of cases daily for current week, 130.

9. Chorlton-upon-Medlock Relief Committee, Cavendish-street Police Station, opened on the 18th instant; average number of cases daily for current week, 594.

Newcastle-on-Tyne County Borough.

Population (1891), 186,300. Rateable Value (1892–93), £894,707.

Letter from *W. H. Stephenson*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in Newcastle, owing principally to the protracted severe weather. Many hundreds of working men have been for nearly two months out of employment, with the result that many of them and their families have for several weeks been destitute. There has also been a considerable amount of distress caused by want of employment, independently of the severe weather, owing largely, I fear, to trade disputes.

2. As to Public Authorities.—The Corporation have employed about 1,300 extra men during the frost. The average daily number so employed during the week ended Saturday, 16th February, was 114 (the lightest week). The Guardians of the Union opened their Test Labour Yard on 21st December 1894. The average daily number so employed during the week ended Saturday, 16th February, was 318.

As to Voluntary Agencies.—A relief committee for the collection and distribution of voluntary contributions in the eastern district of Newcastle, where the distress was most acute, has been working since 22nd January.

A similar committee for the western district has been working since 11th February; and a similar committee for the central district was formed last week, and is now at work. The number of families receiving weekly relief during the week ended Saturday, 16th February, was 796. There are also several organizations providing soup and dinners to many of the distressed poor, and breakfasts to some thousands of poor children.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained by the Corporation, nor, so far as I am aware, at all.

4. I venture to suggest that in times of exceptional distress the Guardians of the Union should have power, with the consent of the Local Government Board, to give for limited periods some kind of out-door relief, which, while on the one hand would save from starvation the hard-working man who is able and most willing to work, but who by reason of exceptionally severe weather or exceptional want of employment in the district, is unable to do so, and is therefore destitute, on the other hand, would not saddle him with any of the disabilities of pauperism. In large industrial centres like the Tyne, where trade depression will sometimes throw thousands out of employment, the present Poor Law Organization is totally inadequate to cope with the matter. The only present mode of dealing with the difficulty is by raising and distributing large voluntary distress funds, which, however admirably conducted, cannot be so efficient as relief administered by an authority who, and whose officers, are appointed solely for the purpose of relieving the necessitous.

OXFORD COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 45,742. Rateable Value (1892–93), £252,133.

Letter from *G. W. Cooper*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

1. THE exceptional distress in Oxford is due to the severity of the weather.

2. This distress is being met by donations from a public subscription fund and from private funds. Soup kitchens have been opened in the different districts, and breakfasts for women and children are being provided at one farthing each. The average daily number relieved is 350.

3. There is no unemployed register.

4. I have no suggestion to make, being satisfied that the distress is being fairly met, and that it is of a temporary nature. The Corporation are carrying out extensive building operations, besides laying out several new streets, and there is no doubt that so soon as the weather breaks there will be plenty of work in Oxford.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

BASINGSTOKE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 8,213. Rateable Value (1892–93), £43,244.

Letter from *W. Powell*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE has been a certain amount of distress in the borough owing partly to agricultural depression, and partly to the severity of the weather, but not very exceptional.

2. The Urban District Council have employed men to break stones; and so soon as the weather breaks, a storm water drain will be laid, which will employ surplus labour; and charitable persons have relieved by gifts of money and coal and soup have been distributed at the Town Hall three days each week for the relief of wives and families of the distressed.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 13,377. Rateable Value (1892–93), £62,787.

Letter from *R. Douglas*, Town Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, and employment has only been stopped owing to the severe weather, which has now ceased.

2. Nothing is required to be done by the public authorities, but the usual winter soup kitchens are still open by voluntary contributions.

3. No unemployed register is required.

4. Any suggestions to be made can only be of service from the districts where the distress exists, and I am pleased to state that in our district we have so little distress, and none to call for any exceptional measures being taken.

BEVERLEY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (YORK, EAST RIDING).

Population (1891), 12,539. Rateable Value (1892–93), £44,056.

Letter from *J. W. Mills*, Town Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no excessive distress in the borough; but owing to the long-continued frost, there is more distress than is usual in the winter time.

2. Steps are being taken by various voluntary agencies to meet the distress, but no reliable record has been kept of the daily averages. These agencies provide food and also money to all deserving applicants who are residents in the town. Ample funds are furnished privately for this purpose.

3. A register of unemployed is kept, and when possible employment is found, otherwise relief is given. About 80 applications have been dealt with since the commencement of the frost, but now that it has broken up the number of unemployed is rapidly decreasing.

4. It is desirable that the Guardians of the Poor should, if possible, give out-door relief in *bonâ fide* cases of distress caused by want of employment under exceptional circumstances, such as the late continued frost. This can be done at a comparatively slight expense, and the acceptance of such relief should not involve any disfranchisement.

BODMIN MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 5,151. Rateable Value (1892–93), £17,296.

Letter from *C. H. Hext*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

I am not aware of any exceptional distress in this district, as there is here no regular industry which can be affected to any appreciable extent.

BRIDGNORTH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SALOP).

Population (1891), 5,865. Rateable Value (1892-93), £19,571.

Letter from *W. H. Beach*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is considerable distress in this district, due to the severity of the weather.

2. The public authorities have made no special effort to cope with the distress, but the Charitable Relief Society endeavoured to meet the difficulty by giving tickets for provisions and coal; also by providing relief works for the unemployed. As Mayor, I have distributed through public subscription about 250 gallons of soup twice a week, with bread in proportion, and coal occasionally, from supplies placed at my disposal by the merchants. The number employed on relief works for the week ended 16th February, was 21 only. The following, however, will show the total number so employed during the severe weather: on the 31st ultimo, 31; the 1st instant, 72; the 2nd, 66; the 4th, 97; the 5th, 53; the 6th, 84; the 16th, 21; the 18th, 32; the 19th, 44; the 20th, 57. The wages paid from the 31st January to the 20th instant, inclusive, amounted to the sum of 56*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.*

3. No register of the unemployed is kept, but the names of those applying for work are taken, and so far as the funds of the society permit, two days' employment per week are provided for them at 2*s.* per day of seven hours. The number of applicants urgently requiring relief work amounts to about 120.

4. I am of opinion that Parliament should compel public authorities to arrange in prospective for relief works and give them power to levy a rate to meet the expenses incurred.

BRIDGWATER MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 12,436. Rateable Value (1892–93), £40,630.

Letter from *P. O. H. Reed*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this borough, arising from want of employment owing to the severe weather.

2. The Corporation have put on a number of men in widening one of the highways within the borough. A public fund has also been raised by subscription for meeting the wants of the unemployed. Ladies' committee appointed also, who visit the houses of the unemployed and distribute relief in kind, according to the several necessities. The Guardians of this Union have also supplemented the ordinary weekly relief to out-door paupers by adding to the relief given to the head of each family 6*d.* per week. On Saturday, 16th instant, 49 householders received relief from fund so raised on the eastern side of the borough, and 336 on the western side.

3. The register of unemployed was commenced on Saturday last, 16th instant, since which period 132 names have been registered, and 130 have been partially employed.

CARLISLE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 39,176. Rateable Value (1892–93), £162,374.

Letter from *G. Coulthard*, Mayor, 20th February 1895.

I THINK I could not do better than send you cuttings from our local papers to show what action we have taken to relieve the present distress in Carlisle. Our Corporation have been employing some 250 men in clearing the snow from our streets, and so soon as that is done we propose opening out some other works for employment so long as the severe weather lasts. Our city, with a population of some 40,000, has subscribed in a few days nearly 600*l.* We have formed ourselves into districts, and are giving out-relief in bread, groceries, and coal, so that I think we are doing here what we can for the relief of the needy poor.

We keep a register of those employed each day, and give so many days to each and then take on others. This we do as well as give out-relief, as you will see we are doing, in addition to those we are employing.

As to your No. 4 question, I think we in Carlisle are showing a good example which might be followed.

While I am writing you, as one who has observed for some time the condition of the working classes, let me remind you, that during the past 10 years wages of the, let us say, joiners, masons, bricklayers, and even the working classes, have gone up some 25 per cent., while, on the other hand, provisions of all kinds and clothing have come down, I should say 50 per cent, as, for instance, flour some 10 years ago was almost double the price at which it is at present, and all other provisions in the same ratio. I think you will bear me out. There must be a leakage somewhere. Where is it?

[The extracts from the local papers referred to comprise about nine columns of printed matter, containing leading articles, notices of meetings, and advertisements relating to contributions to the distress funds.]

CHIPPENHAM MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (WILTS).

Population (1891), 4,618. Rateable Value (1892–93), £17,102.

Letter from *W. Light*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress. It is entirely due to the severe frost preventing work.

2. By voluntary effort a fund has been raised by the Town Council and employed chiefly in soup and bread tickets and coal; and, as far as possible, stone-breaking employment has been given, no other of the public works suggested being possible during the continuance of the frost.

3. A list of unemployed has been made out.

4. No suggestions to make. As far as this town is concerned the local effort is fairly alleviating the distress.

CHORLEY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 23,087. Rateable Value (1892–93), £73,527.

Letter from *J. Mills*, Town Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

I AM given to understand that no exceptional distress exists in this borough; the distress is mainly caused through the severity of the weather.

Secondly, no action is being taken by the local authority, but a soup kitchen has been in existence for three weeks, maintained by voluntary contributions, which appears to meet the case. About 1,200 persons have been relieved daily through the past three weeks.

COWBRIDGE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (GLAMORGAN).

Population (1891), 1,377 Rateable Value (1892–93), £3,999.

Letter from *D. Thomas*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

THIS is a small urban district, having a population of 1,377 and a rateable value of about 4,000*l.* only. It is situate in an agricultural district and is not subject to the incidents affecting large and manufacturing towns and districts in the matter of want of employment during the winter; and there is at present no exceptional distress in this district. There has, therefore, been nothing done of the nature indicated by paragraph 2 of your Circular.

DOVER MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (KENT).

Population (1891), 33,300. Rateable Value (1892–93), £147,149.

Letter from *E. Wollaston Knocker*, Town Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this borough.

2. What distress there is is being met by voluntary agencies. It is estimated that about 1,000 out of a civil population of 30,000 are being fed daily.

3. No employed register is kept or thought necessary.

4. The Mayor does not think any further steps for relieving distress here are required. Large public and private works are in progress, and the frost having now broken there will be work for nearly every one requiring it.

GRANTHAM MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (PARTS OF KESTEVEN).

Population (1891), 16,746. Rateable Value (1892–93), £67,224.

Letter from *W. B. Harrison*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district due to circumstances peculiar to the locality. What distress exists is owing to the severe weather.

2. The distress has been met by voluntary organised agencies in one district as follows: 12th February, 323; 14th February, 319; 16th February, 306; total, 946. Bread and soup in each case was given. In another district soup has been supplied to 52 families three days of week ended 16th February. Besides the above, there has been a large amount of private relief, and every case of known want has been relieved.

3. No register is kept of the unemployed.

4. Distress relieved as given in above replies.

GREAT TORRINGTON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DEVON).

Population (1891), 3,436. Rateable Value (1892–93), £8,914.

Letter from *W. Ashplant*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the borough.

2. The able-bodied men are being employed by the Town Council and other authorities in cutting paths on the common and quarrying stone for making roads.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. I have no suggestions to make.

HEREFORD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (HEREFORD).

Population (1891), 20,267. Rateable Value (1892–93), £103,285.

Letter from *J. Carless, jun.*, Town Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress, owing to prolonged frost.

2. Citizens' fund for relief opened, and nearly 500*l.* distributed, together with gratuitous distribution of soup tickets.

3. No unemployed register.

4. None. The first applicants for relief intended for the unemployed are those who make the least endeavour to obtain employment, and to a great extent the unemployed are those whose habits of life have rendered them more or less unfit for remunerative labour.

HERTFORD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (HERTFORD).

Population (1891), 9,023. Rateable Value (1892–93), £36,220.

Letter from *T. J. Sworder*, Town Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district, except such as is due to the severe weather.

2. The Mayor has, for some days past, put himself at the head of a movement for collecting funds and relieving the unemployed. A very considerable quantity of soup, coals, and bread has been distributed by a committee, of which the Mayor is President, to all who are in distress or unemployed. The Corporation of Hertford have employed during the week ended 16th February 40 men in addition to their ordinary staff. The number of families relieved by the committee, the heads of which have not been employed, is 500.

3. No register is maintained. In a small town like this all the cases are known to the committee.

4. No; except that it is very advisable that employment should be found for the unemployed, or that the State should assist them to emigrate.

HUNTINGDON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (HUNTINGDON).

Population (1891), 4,346. Rateable Value (1892–93), £20,258.

Letter from *J. P. Maule*, Deputy Town Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the borough. Soup is distributed amongst the necessitous poor every week, paid for out of a fund raised by public subscription.

KING'S LYNN MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 18,360. Rateable Value (1892–93), £69,642.

Letter from *W. S. V. Miles*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

1. PREVIOUS to the severe weather there was some exceptional distress in the town, owing to a scarcity of work at the Docks, and the distress increased by the severe weather, which caused a stoppage of work generally.

2. Men with horses and carts were employed removing snow from the streets, also in levelling work at the cemetery, and in stone breaking. The average number of men employed daily during the week ended 16th instant was 76.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

Lostwithiel Municipal Borough (Cornwall).

Population (1891), 1,379. Rateable Value (1892–93), £3,582.

Letter from *W. Pease, jun.*, Town Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this district owing to the severe weather, but the body of men who have suffered most are masons, labourers, and engine-men, who are engaged on the building of a new viaduct on the Great Western Railway below the town; the bulk of these men are strangers here, having been brought by the contractors. The distress here is due solely to the severe weather.

2. It is impossible to give the average daily number relieved during the week specified, as there is no organised relief committee, but help has been very generally given privately, and I believe that all that can be done to relieve the distress is being done, and there are none unrelieved. This authority has put in hand what work it can to provide a certain amount of employment for a few men, by raising sand from the river for roads; removing burthen from a quarry and other small jobs; and most employers of labour are doing what they can to give their men employment. A soup kitchen provided by Mr. Foster, and supported by contributions, has lately been opened three days a week instead of one, and tickets have been given away.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. I do not see that any further steps can be taken to relieve the distress than are already being taken, namely, a provision for the men and their families, until the weather permits a resumption of their employment. It has now been thawing here since yesterday morning, but if it continues, some time must elapse before work can be resumed.

Maidenhead Municipal Borough (Berks).

Population (1891), 10,607. Rateable Value (1892–93), £59,778.

Letter from *John Kick*, Town Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

There is a considerable amount of distress within the borough, owing mainly perhaps to the fact that extensive works of sewerage have been completed, as have also railway extension works, and a great number of men are consequently out of employment. The weather has, of course, caused very severe privation in numerous instances. The Town Council have been employing as many men as possible for some weeks past, the average being 30 per day. Some 200 hands were put on during the week ended the 16th instant. Distress is relieved by bi-weekly distributions of bread, soup, and coals. Daily distributions were made during the recent flood, when the distress was very considerable.

An unemployed register is not kept. Men present themselves daily at the Town Hall, and as many as possible are put to work. The plan is found to answer well.

Middleton Municipal Borough (Lancaster County).

Population (1891), 22,162. Rateable Value (1892–93), £62,138.

Letter from *J. Thorpe*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

There is a little extra distress in this borough, owing to the severe weather.

The Town Council are not at present doing anything to meet the distress, as it has not been so serious as to call for their special consideration. A few people have volunteered to obtain funds to relieve particular cases, and relief has been granted from this source during the current week, and further distributions will be made.

There is no unemployed register maintained.

The present agencies are sufficient to meet the current demands. The granting of borrowing powers by the Local Government Board for works of sewerage would, no doubt, have been of assistance in relieving distress in this borough.

Morpeth Municipal Borough (Northumberland).

Population (1891), 5,219. Rateable Value (1892–93), £16,902.

Letter from *J. R. Hood*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress within the Borough of Morpeth, owing entirely to the long continuance of very severe weather.

2. A relief committee has been formed, consisting of the members of the Town Council, the clergy and ministers, and a number of other gentlemen under my presidency, and voluntary subscriptions have been invited and liberally given by the public. A soup kitchen has been established, where soup and bread is dispensed to all applicants whose cases have been investigated and allowed by the committee. In this way about 200 families, representing about 600 persons, have been relieved. About 200 half-tons of coal have also been distributed. It has also been decided to expend portion of the fund in employing men out of employment in assisting the officials of the Sanitary Authority to thoroughly cleanse the town, which, in consequence of the long and severe frost and accumulation of snow, has got into an untidy and dirty condition.

3. No register of unemployed is kept.

4. I have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving the distress, as in the opinion of the relief committee the measures now being taken meet the requirements of the case.

POOLE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DORSET).

Population (1891), 15,438. Rateable Value (1892-93), £49,268.

Letter from *H. S. Dickinson*, Town Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

I UNDERSTAND that the Mayor has already replied to the former part of your Circular of the 19th February 1895, and it now only remains for me to state that the Council have given instructions for the execution of certain works in connection with the making up of a road, the repairing of a quay wall, and the laying out and levelling of a piece of waste land for the purposes of public recreation, which works will provide employment for as large a number of men as it is possible for the Council, with the means at their disposal, to give employment to.

PWLLHELI MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CARNARVON).

Population (1891), 3,231. Rateable Value (1892-93), £6,673.

Letter from *Geo. Pugh Jones*, Town Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this borough owing to persons being out of employment because of the severe weather.

2. The Town Council of this borough has opened a relief fund to alleviate such distress, such relief taking the form of the distribution of bread, soup, and tea three times a week. The average daily number served is about 450, representing relief being given to about 1,500.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The Town Council of this borough has appointed a committee to take into consideration what employment can be given to those who are in need of same, and it is anticipated that the steps taken by such committee, together with the steps already referred to, will have a tendency to lessen the suffering and hardship occasioned by the present exigency. Every possible step is being taken to carry out the recommendations contained in a former Circular * issued by your Honourable Board.

RIPON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 7,511. Rateable Value (1892-93), £31,530.

Letter from *M. Kirkley*, Town Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is a good deal of distress in Ripon and neighbourhood, due to the exceptional severity of the weather.

2. The Corporation out of the rates are employing as many men as they possibly can in stone-breaking, removing snow, &c. The Ripon Poor Relief Committee, of which the whole Council are members, have taken very active measures to relieve the distress. Since the 16th January last, the committee have distributed about 700 quarts of excellent soup and 700 lbs. of bread thrice a week to all deserving poor in the city and neighbourhood who applied for tickets, and also weekly an average of about 15 tons of coal and coke; the cost being up to date upwards of 200*l*. The Rev. S. Reed, Vicar of Ripon, is also managing a labour yard, where he employs from 40 to 70 men daily in cutting up firewood at 4*d*. per hour. The Rev. F. H. Taylor, of the Cathedral, is also managing a fund by which free breakfasts have been given to very poor children six times per week to the number, up to yesterday, of 1,374. The estimated number relieved weekly by the above means will number upwards of 1,500. I very much doubt if there is a single case of distress in the neighbourhood that is not reached, for even the casuals who tramp from city to city are fed.

3. There is no unemployed register kept at Ripon. The population of the city is only 7,520 and everyone is known to some member of the Council, so that it is unnecessary to keep such a register.

4. I think from the above information you will conclude that the poor are well looked after here, and that in very few cities are the authorities more active in the relief of "distress from want of employment" than in Ripon.

ROMSEY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 4,276. Rateable Value (1892-93), £14,104.

Letter from *M. L. Harle*, Town Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is distress in the borough, due principally to the severe weather.

2. The distress is being efficiently relieved by voluntary agencies. About 250 free breakfasts per day were supplied during the week ended 16th instant to children. Coal is also distributed.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. Distress in this borough being already relieved, no further steps appear to be necessary. So soon as the weather breaks, work will be resumed. Generally, I may say that the committee for the relief of the distress comprises the Mayor, with other members of the Town Council, ministers of religion of all denominations, and others.

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* *See* note * on page 87.

STALYBRIDGE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 26,783. Rateable Value (1892-93), £96,037.

Letter from *J. Miller*, Town Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. The distress amongst the outside labourers has been met by voluntary agencies, the average daily number relieved being 350.

3. No register of the unemployed is maintained.

4. No suggestions are considered necessary for the purpose of relieving the existing distress.

STOCKTON-ON-TEES MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 49,708. Rateable Value (1892-93), £178,529.

Letter from *J. Samuel*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress existing in this town, and it arises, so far as I am able to ascertain, from two causes:—In the first place, I have to state that the staple industries of the town are fairly employed, but owing to the recent severe weather, large numbers of men have been thrown out of work, principally those engaged in shipbuilding, building trades, and those on outside work of all description. The stoppage of shipbuilding yards affects to a considerable extent the steel and iron works, which for want of specifications are not kept fully employed. The second cause is of a more permanent character. Stockton-on-Tees has been a large manufacturer of iron plates and angles. Through the introduction of steel for shipbuilding and boiler purposes, a transition has been going on for some time. We had in full operation a few years ago several iron plate and angle mills, with a large number of puddling furnaces. Some of these are now standing idle. We have at the present time, steel plate mills, which were fully employed up to the date of the recent storm, and owing to the enormous productive capacity of these mills they have thrown a large number of ironworkers permanently out of employment, unless these men find work in other industries.

2. There is nothing done by public authorities. I called a meeting to take into consideration the distress. A Relief Fund was established, which is maintained by voluntary subscriptions. On Saturday last we relieved over 700 families with soup, bread, coal, and coke. We distribute the bread and soup three times a week. Yesterday we supplied 650 families, a number having returned to work. The School Board is giving free breakfasts to about 800 children attending Board and Voluntary Schools; the cost of these breakfasts is also borne by voluntary subscriptions.

3. We do not keep an unemployed register.

4. The question of relieving the distress by opening public works was fully discussed at the last Council Meeting, when a deputation from the unemployed attended. It was thought that in consequence of the large sums which have been expended upon public works, we had completed all that was necessary in the shape of new work for a considerable period to come.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

ALDERSHOT URBAN DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 25,595. Assessable Value (1892-93), £39,459.

Letter from *W. Foster*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

OWING to the building of the Camp, there was no distress in this district until the frost, which threw the men out of work.

There has been a soup kitchen opened in this place (by private subscription), which spends about 6*l.* per day in giving children breakfast in the morning and soup and bread at mid-day. Some of the employers are advancing their men's wages and have opened soup kitchens.

There is no register of unemployed kept.

There are no suggestions to be made, except that the men enjoy good wages and should be more prudent.

ALSAGER URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 1,912. Assessable Value (1892-93), £ ——.

Letter from *F. C. Mayer*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district of the Council.

2. Nothing has been considered necessary to be done to meet cases of distress by public authorities or by voluntary agencies, other than the relief administered by the Guardians and voluntary aid from religious bodies and private persons.

3. No unemployed register is maintained, as it is not considered necessary, there being very few cases of non-employment in the district.

ASTLEY BRIDGE URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 6,239. Assessable Value (1892-93), £24,428.

Letter from *J. Marsden*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THE distress is altogether of an exceptional character, due to the severe weather, and affects the out-door workers only. The mills and other works are making full time.

2. The distress is fully coped with by voluntary agencies, the average daily number relieved with food during last week being about 180.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make, there being no necessity.

BARKING TOWN URBAN DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 14,301. Assessable Value (1892-93), £78,360.

Letter from *H. H. Mason*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. ALTHOUGH there is distress in this district, I think it is not abnormal, with the exception of that arising from the late severe weather, but there have been and are a large number of men out of employment, principally owing to the severity of the Arctic weather we have been experiencing.

2. This Authority has for some time past been doing most of its work without the aid of contractors, and the snow-storms have given employment to some hundreds of men from time to time in the cleansing of the streets. The Council have also started the laying-out of open spaces in their district, which has found employment for some. The average daily number relieved by these agencies during the week ended Saturday the 16th February was about 10, but previous weeks from 80 to 100.

3. A register of the unemployed is maintained by the Council; the total number of names registered during January and February up to date is 146, for some of whom, if not all, the Council have found work from time to time.

4. The cessation of the frost would enable the Council to put a number of men in employment upon the footpaths named in the letter of the 12th instant if the Local Government Board would grant the sanction therein asked.

BETHESDA URBAN DISTRICT (CARNARVON).

Population (1891), 5,799. Assessable Value (1892-93), £7,438.

Letter from *M. Evans*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THE distress is not great here, although the weather must, of course, do a deal of loss to the quarrymen. But in Penrhyn Quarry the manager has done everything possible to have the engines and water ballasts to work every day, and I am given to understand that on four days only they have failed to get these to work. I may also state that the slate trade has been very brisk last year, and the quarrymen, as a rule, are very thrifty and careful people.

2. Nothing has been done by any authority, or by any combination of voluntary agencies, only by private benevolence, and, so far as I know, very few cases have been in any distress in the locality.

3. To my knowledge, there is not in this part an unemployed register kept, although it would be desirable to have one.

4. I have nothing important to suggest, only I think it is a very difficult thing to have any legislation on a special season like the present one to meet the case. Only the Local Government Board may have power to send orders to Parish Councils and Boards of Guardians to start public works, with strict instructions how far to go as to expenses where they have satisfaction that distress exists.

BIDDULPH URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 5,290. Assessable Value (1892-93), £15,825.

Letter from *F. C. Wade*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress prevailing in the Biddulph Urban District, except some little, which is necessarily caused by the long continuance of the severe weather.

2. All such distress as is likely to exist can easily be dealt with by the Guardians, and by voluntary agency, should occasion arise. Most of the manual labourers are employed regularly on farms, in collieries, and fustian-cutting shops. Surface works, such as are indicated in your letter* of the 11th instant on this subject, are an utter impossibility in Biddulph at the present time. The Council has no land at its disposal, and even if it had, the frost-bound condition of the ground (much of which is still covered with snow) would effectually prevent spade-labour. It is too late in the season for stone-breaking, which the unemployed will, generally speaking, accept only as the last resource, for somehow or other they think the stigma of pauperism does attach to it, and, rightly or wrongly, it seems to me to degrade their characters. In fact, my deliberate opinion, after a lengthy experience in this locality, is, that casual labour on public works is not only remarkably inefficient, but extremely wasteful and costly, and that men will not do their duty on relief works for a public authority like they do in an ordinary way for a private employer.

3. No unemployed register is maintained in Biddulph.

4. I have no suggestions to make on the subject, except this: that I much wish the Select Committee now sitting could devise some satisfactory method of dealing with the better and more respectable of the manual labouring class, who are too ashamed to let their severe poverty, caused by no fault of their own, be known, who would rather starve than accept anything in the nature of public relief in work or doles, and who, after all, are the people most deserving of sympathy and help, and certainly more so than the innumerable howling, and, in most cases, worthless ones, who never try to lay by for bad times and want of employment.

**See* note * on page 87.

BIRKENSHAW URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,553. Assessable Value (1892-93), £6,357

Letter from *W. H. Steward*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.

BISHOP STORTFORD URBAN DISTRICT (HERTFORD).

Population (1891), 6,595. Assessable Value (1892-93), £26,557.

Letter from *W. Gee*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

IN Chairman's opinion, no exceptional distress exists in this district, save that which has been lately caused by the extreme severity of the weather, and which will, it is hoped, be mitigated by the breaking-up of the frost now in progress.

BOLSOVER URBAN DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 3,662. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *T. C. Hill*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress: a large number of unemployed men drawn here in the construction of the East to West Railway thrown out of employment by the frost.

2. Nothing is being done other than by voluntary agencies.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. Work might be found in making new roads under consideration, for which a loan would have to be secured by sanction of Local Government Board, as also a scheme for drainage under contemplation, and the disposal of such.

BRAINTREE URBAN DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 5,303. Assessable Value (1892-93), £12,341.

Letter from *A.* and *H. J. Cunnington*, Clerks, 22nd February, 1895.

1. THERE has been some exceptional distress during the past severe weather. It is thought that on the break-up of the frost, matters will resume their normal condition: otherwise there is no exceptional distress.

2. A subscription was opened last week, and a considerable sum of money has been expended on cases of urgent distress, and it is believed that this will enable those families whose means of livelihood have been curtailed through the exceptional severity of the weather, to tide over the bad time.

3. There is no unemployed register.

4. We have no suggestions to make.

BREDBURY AND ROMILEY URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 5,821. Assessable Value (1892-93), £23,683.

Letter from *G. H. Hollingworth*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress, except such as arises from the long-continued frost, which has stopped building, and the operations contingent thereon.

2. Nothing is being done by public authorities.

3. No register of unemployed has been kept.

4. No suggestions to make for relieving the little distress which now exists; but it will cease so soon as the weather changes.

BRIDGEND URBAN DISTRICT (GLAMORGAN).

Population (1891), 4,676. Assessable Value (1892–93), £12,817.

Letter from *W. Buckley*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. THERE is some distress in our district occasioned by the severe weather.

2. There are voluntary agencies which meet the needs of our district. The town is divided into districts and visited, beside which there is a soup kitchen established. Number relieved daily, about 200.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. There will be employment when the frost ends.

BROWNHILLS URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 13,703. Assessable Value (1892–93), £41,542.

Letter from *T. H. Stanley*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the Brownhills district, and this is due principally to the unusual severe weather. The district is chiefly a mining one, and the winter ought to be the best time for the miners, but owing to the severity of the frost the canals are impassable, and so the sales of coal are confined to land carriage alone.

2. Endeavours are being made to meet the distress by voluntary agencies.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

BUCKFASTLEIGH URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 2,646. Assessable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *W. Hamlyn*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

THERE are a few jobbers who have had a bad winter from want of employment, but I believe there is otherwise little exceptional distress here, except on the part of the masons, on account of the weather. The woollen and paper mills and foundry are working as usual, and in the tannery only five men have been unable to work, the remainder working about two-thirds time. The masons and a few jobbers have had a hard time since Christmas, but obtain casual employment. Nothing has been done by the Council; but there is a well-organised Benevolent Society with lady visitors, and several others who visit and give of their private means; so that I believe relief has been given, and will be continued, in all special cases of distress. A special committee has been formed, and funds are being obtained, and the Co-operative Society is also taking the question into consideration. I have duly attempted to inform myself by inquiring of this Benevolent Society, and of the medical gentlemen, and ministers, and others, and their replies lead me to this view. Beyond this, my firm has several times discussed the position, and from week to week have not seen the necessity to start special works, but some days since we put up a public notice, asking for the names of those in distress, and have as yet only received applications from three who were not previously on the lists of those who receive relief in ordinary times.

There is no unemployed register for Buckfastleigh. My recommendation for Buckfastleigh would be, that the Urban District Council should be empowered to pay to a Special Committee such sums from time to time as may be thought wise for temporary relief; and to start the distribution of bread and soup out of its funds. The onus should be thrown on each individual member of the Council to move in the matter, so that the Council should be called together as speedily as possible, and that the chairman be authorised in the meantime, at his discretion, to advance not more than 5*l.* for the above object.

BUGLAWTON URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 1,382. Assessable Value (1892-93), £4,013.

Letter from *F. C. Wade*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress prevailing in this district, except what is necessarily caused by the long continuance of the severe weather and depression in the silk industry. All such distress as is likely to exist can easily be dealt with by the Guardians and by voluntary agency should occasion arise. Most of the manual labourers are employed regularly on farms and in silk mills. The remark contained in my letter to you of this date on behalf of the Biddulph Urban District Council with reference to relief works, and my opinions thereon, apply to Buglawton, which is an adjoining though much smaller district, and therefore it seems unnecessary for me to repeat them.

CAERPHILLY URBAN DISTRICT (GLAMORGAN).

Population (1891), ——. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *D. Lewis*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. ANY exceptional distress which prevails in the district is caused by the severe weather and the stoppage of local collieries.

2. Subject to your Honourable Board's sanction the Council have accepted a tender from a contractor for widening a certain road, and it is understood that the contractor will employ several local men who have been thrown out of work. The application for sanction has been sent by this post. Subscriptions have been obtained and soup kitchens have been opened by voluntary agencies, and about 70 persons have daily been relieved in Caerphilly.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. The distress is believed to be only temporary, many new works being opened up in the district.

CANNOCK URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 20,613. Assessable Value (1892-93), £54,289.

Letter from *C. A. Loxton*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. No intimation has been conveyed to my Council of any exceptional distress in their district from either of the causes mentioned.

2. Nothing except private benevolence, and no record of this is obtainable.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make. I may add that the population of this district being chiefly a mining one, the late severe frost has not occasioned that amount of distress which otherwise might have been expected.

CHISWICK URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 21,963. Assessable Value (1892-93), £101,133.

Letter from *R. F. Finnis*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

THE Council, last evening, considered the Circular Letter of 19th February 1895, and referred it to the Works Committee for consideration and report. The Council have to-day also issued advertisements for the making-up of two private roads at an estimated expense of 2,850*l*.

CROWLE URBAN DISTRICT (PARTS OF LINDSEY).

Population (1891), 3,095. Assessable Value (1892-93), £7,211.

Letter from *J. Hemingbrough*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in our district, owing to work on the bog being stopped by the frost, which has thrown about 200 men out of employment.

2. No public agency, but considerable work has been done by the clergy, tradesmen, brewers, publicans, and private individuals; therefore, although the distress was acute at first, I think that every person who has really needed help has received it.

3. No register here.

4. I believe the relief now being given will be quite sufficient to meet the case until work is renewed on the bog—that is, cutting off peat to make into litter for bedding horses, a great industry in our district.

DALTON-IN-FURNESS URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 13,300. Assessable Value (1892-93), £98,625.

Letter from *J. W. Lawn*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is distress in the district, caused, first, by a larger number of men being out of work than usual through the depression in trade; second, by the heads of many families having gone abroad, leaving their wives and children at home, and not sending sufficient money for their support. There is also at present a wages dispute going on in the district, by which a great many men are thrown idle, but the distress on this account has not yet reached an acute form in any great number of cases. On the whole the distress is not so great as during the last two winters.

2. Nothing is being done by public authorities, apart from the ordinary relief administered by the Guardians, or any organised voluntary agencies. The district Miners' Union provides for the relief of its unemployed members.

3. There is no unemployed register kept by any public authority.

4. No suggestions to make.

DAWLEY URBAN DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 6,996. Assessable Value (1892-93), £9,999.

Letter from *J. Rigg*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the district, due to the severity of the winter, which has put a considerable number of men out of work.

2. A meeting has been held, and a committee formed, for the purpose of providing dinners of soup and bread on three days in each week, beginning on Monday next, to the children (of necessitous parents) attending the public schools. Dinners have for the last week been given to the children attending one public school in the district by private persons.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. None, except action taken by the committee referred to in answer to Question 2.

DENHOLME URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,237. Assessable Value (1892-93), £9,225.

Letter from *G. Burr*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district, only such as is caused by the continued severe weather.

2. There is a voluntary relief committee, who are distributing tickets for groceries, &c., to about 40 to 50 persons per week, in amounts varying from 2*s.* to 5*s.*, according to the necessity of the cases.

3. No register is kept, none being required. The wool-sorting trade seems to be worst in the district, there being from 20 to 30 men out of employment, perhaps only temporary, in that branch of business.

DESBOROUGH URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 2,872. Assessable Value (1892-93), £6,239.

Letter from *T. Gadsby*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. NEARLY every case is due to the severe weather, and I believe that when the frost is all gone most of the men will find employment. You will notice from the list that the men are either labourers or men connected with the building trade. The staple trade of Desborough is the manufacture of boots and shoes and stay-making, and trade in these two branches has been fairly good; hence some of the unemployed (out-door men) have been considerably assisted by their wives and children.

2. Nothing has been done to meet the distress up to the present.

3. An unemployed register has not been maintained. I enclose you herewith a list of the unemployed in this district (who have reported themselves to our office). There are probably a few other cases that have not been reported.

4. I last night brought the matter before the committee of our Local Land Society, and they voted 5*l.* to head a subscription for the relief of the unemployed. I shall make a similar appeal to our Co-operative Society's committee to-night. This may lead to other voluntary assistance, which will enable our Council to give temporary relief.

[The list above referred to includes the names of 30 men out of employment, the number of weeks for which they have been out of employment—the number varying from 4 to 12 weeks; whether the men were married or single, and, where married, the number of the family, and what assistance was rendered by wife or children.]

DORKING URBAN DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 7,132. Assessable Value (1892-93), £35,365.

Letter from *H. J. Chaldecott*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THE exceptional distress which is now prevalent in this town is entirely due, directly or indirectly, to the prolonged severe weather, and exists mainly amongst those whose occupations are thereby affected, such as bricklayers, painters, gardeners, and agricultural labourers.

2. The local authority has never, until this year, been asked to provide work for the unemployed. A fortnight ago, however, the Urban District Council was approached on the subject. They immediately took the matter up, and ultimately decided to drain and partly lay out an addition to the local cemetery, which, although purchased, will not be required immediately. Within 48 hours of the meeting of the Council from 20 to 30 men were actually employed in this way, preference being given to those who have families to support. Fifty-one men were so employed during the

week ended the 16th instant. On the 15th instant a public meeting was hurriedly summoned, and a local committee formed, for the purpose of collecting funds and alleviating the distress which exists, particularly amongst the wives and children of the unemployed. The appeal has been liberally responded to, and the committee has been, and is, sitting three days a week to investigate cases, and to relieve at once, principally by giving orders for coals and groceries.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The council have no suggestions to make for dealing with the subject on future similar occasions, but would like to point out that the very atmospheric causes which throw men out of work are equally hindrances to local authorities in finding employment for them. The Council desire me to state that in their opinion this subject is one which ought more properly to fall within the duties of the various Boards of Guardians, and that either those Boards are extremely supine, or else that legislative action is promptly needed to permit of greater elasticity in the administration of the Poor Law.

Ealing Urban District (Middlesex).

Population (1891), 23,979. Assessable Value (1892-93), £164,372.

Letter from *W. Ruston*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

There is very little distress prevalent in this district. A voluntary committee—consisting of all classes—has been formed, and subscriptions raised to the extent of 500*l.* within the last three weeks, and this amount has been distributed through the various societies in the district, and from a very careful visitation which has been made it is stated that there is practically no case of actual want in the district. In addition to the above, the District Council have engaged a number of men on a class of work which otherwise would not have been undertaken. It is also proposed to commence a certain amount of sewer work, and to expend a certain sum in the levelling of the recreation ground—about 13 acres—which will employ a considerable number of men. In connection with several of these matters application will have to be made for a loan in aid of same.

East Stonehouse Urban District (Devon).

opulation (1891), 15,401. Assessable Value (1892-93), £39,636.

Letter from *R. R. Rodd, jun.*, Clerk, 20th February 1895.

I cannot do better than send you the enclosed copy of the *Western Morning News* of Thursday last (14th February), wherein you will observe what is being done to relieve the distress in East Stonehouse.

[Extract from "Western Morning News," 14 February 1895.]

A meeting was held in the Townhall, Stonehouse, yesterday morning, at which members of the Coal Society, Soup Kitchen, and Blanket Society, attended to consider the exceptional distress. Amongst those present were Messrs. W. W. Blight (chairman of the District Council), Mrs. J. E. Morgan (hon. secretary Robin Committee), Rev. J. W. Gaud (president Soup Kitchen), Rev. B. B. Liptrott (president Coal Society), Rev. W. A. Prideaux (hon. secretary Soup Society), Messrs. J. C. Wills, W. H. Jennings, P. Vosper, Rev. J. G. Pearson, Mr. E. C. Bignell, the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe, and Mr. R. R. Rodd, jun.—The Chairman (Mr. Blight) explained the objects of the meeting, which was to form a committee from the various charity societies there represented, with a view to united and systematic action. He invited representatives to report on the workings of the various societies.—Mr. Wills stated that since Christmas 1,846 coal tickets had been distributed, representing 92 tons 7 cwts. of coal. Of that number, 1,050 had been issued within the last ten days. To meet the present demand the society had been giving tickets at the rate of thirty for the £, which was 50 per cent. in excess of their usual supply. Consequently their balance of 25*l.* had now dwindled down to 7*l.*—Mr. Gaud, on behalf of the Soup Society, explained that their usual plan was to open the kitchens on two days a week. Under the present circumstances, however, they had increased this to three days a week. The number of persons who had so far availed themselves of this was 300. In connection with the Robin dinners, a balance of 9*l.* from the recent dinner was reported, and it was intended to give a series of breakfasts to children, the first of which took place on Tuesday morning last. Some 250 children were present, and so much food remained that a mid-day meal had to be given to a similar number. Breakfasts would also be given this and Saturday mornings.—Mr. Rodd, from information from the Blanket Society, mentioned that 270 blankets had been given out; and Mr. Pearson, on behalf of a Dorcas Club connected with his congregation, said that the latter had also distributed 40, besides having issued tickets for other purposes.—Mr. Blight stated that the District Council had found work for 64 of the unemployed. Even these had had to be regularly whipped up, and on investigating their circumstances the council found that many cases had actually been in receipt of various coal and other relief tickets.—A Circular Letter* from the Local Government Board was read, authorising the District Council to co-operate with the Board of Guardians with a view to providing work for the unemployed. The Stonehouse District Council had thus anticipated this order by over a week.—The Earl of Mount Edgcumbe thought that the private societies had been doing most excellent work during this bitter winter. They had been giving 50 per cent. more than their usual outlay. He hoped, therefore, that more subscriptions would be forthcoming for so deserving charities.—The various ministers present stated that with the assistance they had received from members of their respective congregations they would be enabled to tide over the present prevailing distress for at least a fortnight. In view of this, and of the fact of the District Council's action in providing so many of the unemployed with work, and of the extra relief granted by the Guardians, the committee adjourned for a fortnight.

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*See note * on page 87.

Exmouth Urban District (Devon).

Population (1891), 9,297. Assessable Value (1892-93), £——.

Letter from *H. C. Adams*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. There is a great deal of exceptional distress in the district due to the severe weather, which prevents the fishermen from following their usual occupation, and prevents any masons and gardeners and agricultural labourers from doing any work.

2. The Vicar of Littleham received 71*l.* from Public Charities Offertory and private gift, and during the week ended Saturday the 16th of February relieved 90 persons and 145 families by tickets for provisions, coals, and soup kitchen. The Exmouth soup kitchen distributed 270 quarts of soup on each of three separate days. The Vicar of Withycombe received subscriptions and distributed 10 tons of coal and about 100 quarts of soup every other day. The Chairman of the Urban District Council has received subscriptions which have enabled him to distribute coals, bread, and groceries, and soup, Irish stew and dinners for children on the 7th, 8th, 9th, 11th, 12th, 14th, and on the 15th, children's dinner, and relief again on the 16th. In Littleham parish 262 cases were relieved: coals, 3 tons 12 cwt., groceries, 29*l.* 8*s.* 10*d.*, bread, 993 quartern loaves, soup, 115 quarts, hot dinners, 199. In Withycombe parish 267 cases: coals, 4 tons 15 cwts., groceries, 31*l.* 16*s.* 2*d.*, bread, 861 quartern loaves, soup, 145 quarts, hot dinners, 235. No employment could be given, as the frost was so deep in the ground that work was out of the question.

3. No unemployed register has been maintained.

4. No suggestion can be made, except that funds are urgently wanted to continue giving relief as long as the severe cold continues.

Fairfield Urban District (Derby).

Population (1891), 2,103. Assessable Value (1892-93), £6,230.

Letter from *C. Slater*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

Owing to the severe weather there has been some amount of distress in the district. The Urban District Council has employed as many extra men as possible in breaking stone and cleansing the streets, for the purpose of assisting unemployed workmen. A Relief Committee was formed a month ago and subscriptions solicited. Relief has been given twice each week in groceries, coals, &c., the average number of families relieved being 75. Seventy-four families were relieved on Tuesday, and 79 on Friday in the week ended 16th February.

3. No unemployed register has been maintained.

4. The present agencies have so far dealt with the cases as they have arisen, and as donations to the Relief Fund have been generously given, there is every prospect of the committee being able to cope with the present and any further distress which may arise.

Farsley Urban District, (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 5,328. Assessable Value (1892-93), £15,519.

Letter from *E. Wade*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

Since receiving your circular of the 19th instant a street-to-street visitation has been made throughout this district, and a census taken of the unemployed, and of the cases of distress consequent on the severe weather and the depression in the worsted, woollen, and iron industries in the district; the result is we find about 50 per cent. of the working classes are fully or nearly fully employed; about 40 per cent. employed from two to four days a week, and about 10 per cent. unemployed since the beginning of this year.

No register of the unemployed is kept.

The District Council having done nothing in providing extra employment or otherwise giving relief, but voluntary agencies are at work and some relief is given to most of the urgent cases. The number of persons receiving out-door relief is about the same as at the corresponding time of last year. When the frost has gone very few will be long out of employment.

Frome Urban District (Somerset).

Population (1891), 9,613. Assessable Value (1892-93), £25,250.

Letter from *E. J. Ames*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

There is no exceptional distress in the district of Frome except such as has naturally arisen from the severity of the weather.

I have enquired of some of the builders how their masons and labourers have managed during the lengthened frost, and I am informed that the masters make advances to their men who have applied for same, on account of the future work. I beg further to state that there is employment for labourers in the way of breaking stones, &c., more than sufficient for those who are willing to work. Under the foregoing circumstances there has been no occasion for any public relief works.

GARSTON URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 13,444. Assessable Value (1892-93), £71,700.

Letter from *J. E. Sheppard*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district partly owing to the severe weather, and to the fact that comparatively few men are being employed at the London and North Western Railway Company's Docks, and also in consequence of the men employed at several of the large works only working three-quarter time.

2. Nothing is being done by this District Council, but the distress is being relieved by voluntary subscriptions. The average daily number relieved during the week ended 16th February was 1,634.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

GILDERSOME URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,175. Assessable Value (1892-93), 7,985.

Letter from *W. Ellis*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is very little exceptional distress, not more than a dozen men being out of employment in consequence of the frost, all of whom are bricklayers and bricklayers' labourers, &c., and I am informed by their employers that, in their opinion, although, of course, the men must severely feel the loss of wages during the severe weather, their circumstances are not such as to warrant exceptional relief. This may be accounted for by the fact that their sons or daughters, and in some cases their wives, are employed in the staple industry of the village, viz., the woollen trade. I may add, however, that unfortunately that industry is at the present time generally depressed, and consequently the pinch of poverty must in some cases be felt, and should the frost continue much longer some organized relief will be absolutely necessary.

2. The Council has employed as many as applied in the removal of snow from the causeways and footpaths in its district, but, so far as I know, have no other means of finding them employment.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make. Should, however, the severe weather continue, I have no doubt that public subscriptions will be forthcoming to meet the case, and I shall feel myself bound to take steps to obtain such subscriptions. It is within my knowledge that one religious society has pretty well made a house-to-house visitation, with the object of ascertaining the amount of distress existing, and have distributed relief in kind in the most needy cases, which I am informed were of the ordinary kind. I believe this society will continue its efforts for a time, and that they will be able to obtain the necessary funds.

GILLINGHAM URBAN DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 27,809. Assessable Value (1892-93), £55,537.

Letter from *J. Basset*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE has been exceptional distress in parts of this district, owing partly to the weather and partly to works being closed through slackness of trade. The greater portion, however, of the inhabitants of this district are employed in H.M. Dockyard, Chatham, and have been fully employed.

2. This Urban District Council has employed numbers of extra men, removing snow, &c., during the last three weeks, and about 1,000 persons have been relieved daily by voluntary agencies in different parts of the district.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The Council have no suggestions to make, but they propose to carry out a scheme of main drainage (which would give employment to a very large number of men) as soon as the consents of the Local Government Board, Admiralty, and Medway Conservancy Board are obtained.

GLYNCORRWG URBAN DISTRICT (GLAMORGAN).

Population (1891), 3,522. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. G. Morris*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no distress from want of employment in our district. With the exception of a few mountain farms, the only industry is coal mining, and all the collieries have been working regularly during the severe weather, and no cases of distress have come under my notice.

GOLBORNE URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 5,601. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *S. S. Brown*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. No very exceptional distress, but any that there may be is due to the weather.

2. Nothing has been done by any public authority, except the Board of Guardians. Private persons, through the ministers of religion of the district, have relieved some of the most pressing cases.

3. No unemployed register kept.

GREASBOROUGH URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,217. Assessable Value (1892-93), £9,130.

Letter from *E. Jackson*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. IN this district, the staple trades of which are the coal and iron, owing to the depression in these trades, short time is being worked, and as a result the wages are in many cases reduced by from one-third to one-half the amount usually obtained when full time is being worked. The spell of severe weather has also interfered with a number of others who are dependent on out-door labour.

2. Although there is the distress above referred to, no public steps have been taken to afford relief.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. If your Board would sanction the loan which we long since applied for, to enable our Council to lay down mains to convey a water supply from Rotherham to Greasborough, and for other work in connection therewith, my impression is that we should then be in a position to considerably alleviate much of the distress which, at any rate, exists by reason of the severe weather.

GREAT DRIFFIELD URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, EAST RIDING).

Population (1891), 5,703. Assessable Value (1892-93), £17,037.

Letter from *G. B. Tonge*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE has lately been some distress to the labouring class in this town, who are dependent upon out-door work, in consequence of the severe weather. In consequence of the change of weather the labourers will now be able to resume their usual avocations.

2. This Authority has not done anything to meet the distress, but relief has been granted by a charitable institution and other voluntary agencies, but I am not able to give the number relieved.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

HANDSWORTH URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 32,756. Assessable Value (1892-93), £130,319.

Letter from *H. Ward*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THE distress which exists is due to severe weather.

2. Many private agencies are at work, and relief given in those cases in which it appears necessary.

3. A register of the unemployed is not kept, the same not being necessary.

4. No suggestions to make.

HAYLE URBAN DISTRICT (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 1,172. Assessable Value (1892-93), £3,818.

Letter from *E. Boase*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

So far as is known, there is as yet no exceptional distress in this district.

HEATON NORRIS URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 7,164. Assessable Value (1892-93), £41,476.

Letter from *J. G. Banks*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no complaint of exceptional distress.

HITCHIN URBAN DISTRICT (HERTFORD).

Population (1891), 8,860. Assessable Value (1892-93), £27,859.

Letter from *W. O. Times*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE has been for three weeks past exceptional distress in this district, and this is due entirely to the severe weather.

2. The public authorities have done nothing. There are a large number of voluntary agencies. Soup-kitchens have been established, and works of moving earth and levelling on private ground. The probable average daily number relieved altogether has been 100.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. The severe weather having passed away, and the ordinary work of the district having re-commenced, there are probably not more than 30 or 40 men now unemployed in the district, and this distress is not exceptional at any time.

Hornsea Urban District (York, East Riding).

Population (1891), 2,613. Assessable Value (1892-93), £7,639.

Letter from *T. Hornsey*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress.

2. A soup kitchen was opened early in January (by voluntary agency), and up to the 16th instant 264 loaves of bread and 314 quarts of soup have been distributed amongst from 50 to 60 families.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4 No suggestions to make.

Ilford Urban District (Essex).

Population (1891), 10,913. Assessable Value (1892-93), £41,219.

Letter from *E. J. Beal*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. The distress in this district is only temporary, and is attributable to the severe weather.

2. The District Council employed a great number of men to clear the streets of snow, and the residents raised a fund to meet the distress in urgent cases, and 300 families were relieved by this fund last week.

3. No register is kept, as so few men are generally out of work in this district.

4. This Council are unable to make any suggestions for the relief of distress generally, but have in this district started what may be considered as relief work by laying down surface water drains in such roads under the control of the authority, which have not heretofore been carried out. The Council have resolved to apply to your Honourable Board for sanction to borrow a sum of 500*l.* for this purpose, but felt their object would be better served by at once taking up the work, well knowing they could rely upon the sanction of your Honourable Board being obtained.

Keswick Urban District (Cumberland).

Population (1891), 4,002. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *R. Broath*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

There is not any exceptional distress within this Urban District, and voluntary agencies are in existence to afford relief to persons who may be in distress owing to severe weather. There is not an unemployed register maintained here.

Kingswood Urban District (Gloucester).

Population (1891), 9,114. Assessable Value (1892-93), £17,772.

Letter from *S. F. Andrews*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. Exceptional distress does exist, and it is due to the severity of the weather, not from circumstances peculiar to the district.

2. This Council are doing all they can to provide work, but the very cause of the distress prevents much out-door work being done: voluntary agencies daily relieve about 300 persons.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The Council have no suggestions to make; they agree with the suggestions of the Circular* issued recently by the Local Government Board.

Kirkburton Urban District (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 3,154. Assessable Value (1892–93), £7,311.

Letter from *J. N. Senior*, 21st February 1895.

1. At a meeting of inhabitants of Kirkburton, on the 7th February, it was stated that there was some distress, particularly amongst outdoor workers, and a committee was appointed to deal with the matter, a sufficient sum being subscribed to carry on the work for about three weeks.

2. In addition to the above, the District Council have been and are now providing work on the roads, such as breaking dross, and to some extent for teams and drivers for leading same from the railway station. The Council have also found some employment for a few men in throwing ashes on the highway in hilly and dangerous places, and in clearing snow from footpaths and streets, and also cleaning out grates and gutters, so that when the thaw sets in the grates, &c. may not be blocked.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. Not beyond what has been done, as above described.

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*See note * on page 87.

LATHOM AND BURSCOUGH URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 6,798. Assessable Value (1892-93), £——.

Letter from *F. C. Hill*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the district amongst the canal boatmen, owing to the canal being frozen.
2. This is being met by voluntary agencies. About 300 relieved twice a week by distribution of soup, &c.
3. No unemployed register is kept, nor is one necessary.
4. When the frost goes the distress will to a great extent cease.

LEES URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 3,877. Assessable Value (1892-93), £13,581.

Letter from *J. Hudson*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE has been no exceptional distress in this district, but there has been a small amount due to the severe weather.
2. Nothing is being done by the Urban Authority; they have no means of knowing if anything is being done voluntarily.
3. No register is maintained.
4. The Urban District Council have no suggestions to make.

LITHERLAND URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 4,441. Assessable Value (1892-93), £15,810.

Letter from *North, Kirk & Cornett*, Clerks, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district, but such as exists is attributable to the severe weather, which has caused all building operations to be at a standstill.
2. Nothing has been done by the public authorities to meet the temporary distress, but voluntary agencies have opened three soup kitchens, viz.:—
   (*a*) One at 17, Bridge-road, at which about 180 families and 18 unemployed men have been supplied with soup and bread daily.
   (*b*) One at St. Philip's Church Schools, at which about 20 families, and 50 or 60 children, have daily received soup and bread. Coals have also been supplied in urgent cases by the Vicar of the parish out of contributed funds.
   (*c*) Another soup kitchen by Mr. A. D. Golding, in Litherland Park, at which from 12 to 20 children have been fed daily.
3. There is no unemployed register maintained, as there is no necessity therefor.
4. The distress, in so far as it exists, has been coped with, and there are no further suggestions to make in the matter.

LOFTUS URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 6,327. Assessable Value (1892-93), £——.

Letter from *W. Moore*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress within the limits of the Loftus Urban District. The chief industry is iron ore mining, and full time is afforded to all the workmen.

LONG EATON URBAN DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 9,636. Assessable Value (1892-93), £30,367.

Letter from *S. Butler*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is severe distress, due to the severe weather; also from the very short time being made at the railway works, and the other machinery-making shops, in this case due to long-continued depression in the lace trade.
2. Nothing is being done by public authorities. "No funds." The voluntary spirit has been entered into with *éclat*, namely, by donations, concerts, &c., &c., realising in the first week to the 16th February about 60*l.* or 70*l.*, which is being dealt out by working committees, who investigate and give out tickets for coals, groceries, bread, soup, &c., &c. The local Co-operative Society has voted 40*l.* of its reserve funds to be given to the same object, thus promptly was 100*l.* in hand, which has done an immense amount of good already.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. A circular be sent to all authorities and councils, requiring them to keep an unemployed register, and that those in counties to be kept in duplicate at the county council offices, where at a glance the condition of the workers could be seen, and the information sent on to parts where there is a better demand for labour. If this were done, and a report sent to the local councils, steps could be taken to effect a remedy when the number was becoming abnormal. The local councils should at once find work to relieve the congestion before it assumes the condition we find it now arrives at before anything is being done to relieve it. To effectually do this, it will be essential that the authorities have a fund to fall back upon. I suggest that each authority shall have a standing bank balance for this purpose only, which could be drawn upon as needed, and not be always at the risk of either doing nothing for want of funds, or inflating the rates by drawing on them, especially in dire times of distress.

LONG SUTTON URBAN DISTRICT (PARTS OF HOLLAND).

Population (1891), 2,439. Assessable Value (1892-93), £5,491.

Letter from *R. Winfrey*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. WE have had exceptional distress, due entirely to the severe weather. This being a purely agricultural district, there has been but little work upon the land since Christmas.

2. A fortnight ago I called a town's meeting, and formed a Distress Committee. The committee have sat every morning, and dealt with all cases reported to them. We found tree-felling and wood-chopping for the able-bodied men at 2*s.* a day, and relieved every necessitous case with bread, groceries, and coals from funds collected in the town. Besides this, we have during the week given dinners to upwards of 100 school children on four days.

3. We have no unemployed register, as our town is so small we know every case.

4. We have found that the extension of allotments has been very beneficial. Very few men having allotments of one acre have come before us for relief; and in the few cases of men with allotments asking for relief, their distress has been entirely due to their thriftlessness and drunken habits.

MALVERN URBAN DISTRICT (WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 6,107. Assessable Value (1892-93), £54,660.

Letter from *W. Lambert*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

There is no unemployed register maintained.

The Council have no suggestions to make.

MATLOCK BATH AND SCARTHIN NICK URBAN DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 1,846. Assessable Value (1892-93), £7,464.

Letter from *J. E. Lawton*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. Such distress as there is has been thoroughly dealt with by the members of the Council in conjunction with about 25 ladies and gentlemen. The small district has been divided into sections, and the general committee named has also been divided into four equal parts. All cases have been visited thrice weekly, and the circumstances relieved by a voluntary fund raised by the committee, who have confined their relief to the distribution of coal, groceries, soup, and bread. During the week ended Saturday, 16th February, 43 cases were thus dealt with.

3. There is no unemployed register kept, there being no necessity for the same.

4. The Council have no special suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving distress.

MEXBOROUGH URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 7,734. Assessable Value (1892-93), £17,801.

Letter from *J. W. Hattersley*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is some exceptional distress in this district at the present time, but this is due rather to the severity of the weather than to circumstances peculiar to the locality, although the latter has some bearing on the subject, the several industries being working very short time.

2. A voluntary fund was commenced about the 13th instant to meet the distress, and a good number of people are being relieved daily by means of such fund. I cannot, however, give you the number relieved during the period mentioned.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. No suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving the distress.

MILLOM URBAN DISTRICT (CUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 8,895. Assessable Value (1892–93), £75,691.

Letter from *W. Lawrence*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. AT the present time there is exceptional distress in the Urban District of Millom, which, however, is of recent origin. It is due to the fact that the district depends almost entirely on the local iron mines and iron smelting works. The continued depression in the iron trade is now affecting the miners and workmen at Millom, and about 40 miners have been compelled to discontinue their employment. For the last two weeks there has been a lock-out at the local ironworks owing to a dispute between the employers and employed with reference to a proposed reduction of wages, and there is no present indication that the dispute will speedily terminate. About 175 men are at present idle on this account. Both the miners and ironworkers, however, received weekly contributions from their trades union funds, varying according to the dependent family in each case, and averaging 10*s.* per week for man and wife, and (in the case of the ironworkers only) an additional 1*s.* per child. Many artizans and labourers usually employed in general outdoor occupations have been unable to continue work owing to the severe weather, but the latter are mostly temporary cases. It is estimated that there are now about 275 men unemployed in Millom, in a population of about 9,000.

2. The Urban District Council has so far done nothing to meet the exceptional distress, except by very temporary employment given to about 90 men in the removal of snow from streets. No associated voluntary agencies or relief committees have yet been formed in the district.

3. No unemployed register has been kept, the distress being of recent origin, but the desirability of maintaining such a register will be brought before the Council.

4. The Council are about to consider the necessity of providing certain relief works of the nature mentioned in the Circular Letter * of the Department, dated 11th instant, relating to the "unemployed."

MOSS SIDE URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 23,833. Assessable Value (1892–93), £99,318.

Letter from *H. C. Crofton*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

THE district is one of the suburbs of Manchester; the population is not of a working-class character, the large majority of the population being of the warehouseman and clerk class, whose occupations are not dependent on weather, not lying out of doors, consequently it is believed that in the Moss Side district there is not any great distress caused by the long continuance of inclement weather. The workmen employed by the Council have been working full time, with the exception of the paviors and their labourers, 10 in all, for whom, however, half a week's work weekly has been found by the Council during the last four weeks. In the small poorer portion of the district voluntary agencies have been at work to meet any exceptional distress, and are believed to have been efficient for the purpose.

NESTON AND PARKGATE URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 3,577. Assessable Value (1892–93), £11,386.

Letter from *W. Harper*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.
2. Nor any demand for exceptional relief.
3. No unemployed register is maintained or required.
4. No suggestions to make.

OLD SWINDON URBAN DISTRICT (WILTS).

Population (1891), 5,706. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *W. Reynolds*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is a little exceptional distress in this district amongst builders and their men, due to severe weather.

2. A soup kitchen has been established by voluntary agency, and soup and bread are distributed on three days a week, whilst coal tickets are also given to those in need of fuel. During the week ended Saturday, the 16th February, 220 persons received soup and bread three times. This number includes children, and those in work earning small wages.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. It is the opinion of the Board that the distress will cease on a change in the weather.

RADCLIFFE URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 20,015. Assessable Value (1892-93), £66.511.

Letter from *J. Sharples*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

ALTHOUGH trade in this district is in a depressed condition, there is no exceptional distress, except amongst those thrown out of employment through the severity of the weather; a private subscription list has been opened to alleviate the temporary distress, and there is no register of unemployed in the town; we intend to offer employment to cleanse the streets and empty ashpits as soon as such work is possible.

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* *See* note * on page 87.

RADSTOCK URBAN DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 3,438. Assessable Value 1892–93), £7,294.

Letter from *G. Pearson*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

I HAVE made inquiries from the Chairman of the Council, who writes me, as follows:—"The population of Radstock is chiefly employed at collieries in and around the Urban District, which are now working at least four days a week, and in some cases more; the earnings of colliers being about 3*s.* 9*d.* to 4*s.* per day, and the day men from 3*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* per day, so that at the lowest rate of working, viz., four days, the colliers earn from 15*s.* to 16*s.*, and the day men from 12*s.* to 14*s.* per week, which cannot cause any exceptional distress. Next in importance among the industries of the place are wagon building, engineering and brewing, where the men are fully employed, and the only classes out of work are the masons and labourers, who are limited in number. No register is kept of these, and their number cannot therefore be stated; but no cases of distress amongst them have come under public notice." This gentleman is the agent of Lord Carlingford, the proprietor of the collieries in question, and his knowledge of the industries of the district can be fully relied on. I also consulted the Vice-Chairman, who writes as follows:—"That farm labourers are being engaged full time, and that recently additional men have been employed in threshing operations. In my opinion, too, there is no distress from want of employment in this district." This gentleman farms about two-thirds of the area of the parish, and is therefore in a position to speak as to the position of the farm labourers. The continued cold weather has doubtless been very trying to the poor, more especially to those in the receipt of parochial relief, but I believe small sums of additional relief have been granted. All the men in the employment of the Council have been engaged full time.

RAINFORD URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 3,472. Assessable Value (1892 93), £11,841.

Letter from *B. Smith*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895

THE District Council do not consider it requisite to provide additional works within the district of Rainford.

RHYMNEY URBAN DISTRICT (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 7,733. Assessable Value (1892–93), £15,136.

Letter from *J. Edwards*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE are very few cases of exceptional distress in this district caused by the severe weather.

2. This Council, at the last meeting held on the 6th instant, decided to employ all those out of employment and *bonâ fide* residents of the district, and up to Saturday the 16th instant nine were employed, three additional men have been put on this week, making in all 12. In addition to the above a relief committee has been formed, and from inquiries made 41 families were assisted in sums varying from 10*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.*; these are the usual cases of poverty, but made worse through the severe weather.

3. No unemployed register is maintained, nor is it necessary.

4. The only suggestion I have to make is, that the Guardians should increase the relief to the out-door paupers during weather of such exceptional severity as has been experienced lately.

RUGBY URBAN DISTRICT (WARWICK).

Population (1891), 11,262. Assessable Value (1892–93), £50,589.

Letter from *C. Elsee*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in Rugby at the present time, except such as has arisen from the prolonged frost. This has thrown out of work—as happens to a greater or less degree every winter—a number of labourers who are permanently resident here, and has in addition kept out of work a number of navvies who have been attracted here by a railway (Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire) which is about to be made through the district.

2. Voluntary agencies have very efficiently met the exigencies which have arisen—(i.) by providing cheap dinners; (ii.) by providing shelter and food for the navvies; (iii.) by giving help in any needful way in the poorest homes. About 120 navvies were being cared for at the end of last week, and perhaps as many more were provided with cheap dinners.

3. No unemployed register has been maintained.

4. I have no suggestions to make. In former years the Local Board has frequently provided employment for those who cared to have it in spade husbandry; but this has not been practicable this season.

ST. AUSTELL URBAN DISTRICT (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 3,477. Assessable Value (1892–93), £10,632.

Letter from *E. Carlyon*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is temporary distress in this urban district due to the severe weather, but the locality is otherwise free from distress, and is not directly affected either by depressed agriculture or mining.

2. Voluntary subscriptions have been raised, and temporary aid is being administered by a relief committee. About 200 persons of the labour class were provided with relief in the shape of fuel and provisions during the week ended on Saturday the 16th February.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. It is considered that when the severe weather moderates the distress here will be at an end, and that there will be no necessity for any further local action for relief purposes.

St. Neots Urban District (Huntingdon).

Population (1891), 4,077. Assessable Value (1892–93), £13,320.

Letter from *J. McUish*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

There is no exceptional distress in this Board's district, on the contrary, charitable appeals have been less than usual this winter. I attribute this satisfactory state of affairs to the following among other reasons :—1. The Great Northern Railway Company have during the autumn employed surplus labour on widening their line through the district. 2. The paper mill, recently reopened by local effort, has found considerable employment for women, rather more than in former years. 3. The unusually low price of every article of food. 4. The fact that during late years much of our surplus labour has drifted into the towns.

During the recent frost labourers out of employ (together with the customary loafers common to every town) earned more money on the ice than their normal earnings amount to at this time of the year.

Sale Urban District (Chester).

Population (1891), 9,644. Assessable Value (1892–93), £52,770.

Letter from *H. Dixon*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in the Council's district, which is due entirely to the severity of the weather.

2. Public authorities are doing nothing to meet the distress, but the following private agencies gave the following relief during the week ended Saturday the 16th instant. The Sale and Ashton-on-Mersey Provident Society relieved with bread and soup :—11 Feb., 278 ; 12 Feb., 256 ; 13 Feb., 278 ; 14 Feb., 263 ; 15 Feb., 276 ; 16 Feb., 280 ; a total of 1,631 persons for the week, or a daily average of 272. In addition to this, 71 families were relieved by the Society with groceries, coal, and milk. In addition to the above, Mr. Thomas Burnby, of the Bull's Head Hotel, out of subscriptions received from friends, distributed during the same week a daily average of 330 breakfasts, principally to children, consisting of bread and butter and hot coffee. Mr. Burnby also, on 16th February, gave meat and peas to 26 families to make soup at their own houses, sufficient for 260 persons.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. The Chairman is quite of opinion that the existing private agencies are sufficient to cope with the distress, and has no suggestions to offer, as when the frost breaks up there will be plenty of work in the district for out-door labour.

Sandbach Urban District (Chester).

Population (1891), 5,824. Assessable Value (1892-93), £14,286.

Letter from *Rev. J. Armitstead*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. Owing to the entire stoppage of some iron works in this district, whose business was to supply cotton ties to America, owing to the McKinley Tariff Bill, there has, for the last five years, been a considerable want of employment among a certain class of the inhabitants of the district. This hostile tariff is now, I believe, to a certain degree relaxed. I fear, however, that owing to a change of the system of making ties, there is still but little chance of these works being reopened. The salt trade too has of late been in a depressed state in the district ; but upon the other hand, Messrs. Monot & Co. have works in the district which are fairly flourishing, and have provided a considerable amount of employment. The present long continued, and very severe weather has, no doubt, increased the number of unemployed, and caused a considerable amount of distress.

2. During the present frost, a considerable amount of relief has been given by the different ecclesiastical denominations, and by public and private charity, in shape of coals, bread, and soup, but I am unable to state the exact numbers relieved from day to day. About Christmas a work of improvement in the town was commenced by the governors of the charities upon their property, in order to afford work to the unemployed. This, however, being earth work, has been unfortunately entirely suspended by the frost ; as soon, however, as the weather changes, this work will be resumed, and will, we hope, provide a certain amount of employment for the greater part of the deserving unemployed during the remainder of the winter. Perhaps the greatest amount of special distress owing to frost has been caused by the stoppage of the North Staffordshire Canal, which passes through a part of our district.

3. An unemployed register has not been maintained, nor do I think that it is necessary here.

4. I have no special suggestion to make for the relief of the distress, which, though no doubt prevalent in the district, is not, I think, greater than in most semi-rural Urban Districts. I only wish that I had some suggestion to make. I fear, however, that the main cause is the population, owing to the present depressed state, both of trade and agriculture, having outgrown the employment. I may add, that our relief in charity is mainly given to men with families who are out of work, and would work if they could get it.

SCAMMONDEN URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 453. Assessable Value (1892–93), £1,049.

Letter from *G. Wheelwright*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no particular distress in our district, so that we have no need to do anything; also we have very few unemployed, only a few that are loafing about, too lazy to work, and only about three or four of that sort in our district.

2. Nothing being done.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

SELBY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 6,022. Assessable Value (1892–92), £18,668.

Letter from *J. H. Bantoft*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

DISTRESS in this district is caused principally, if not entirely, by the recent inclement weather, which has prevented any agricultural work from being done. A soup kitchen has been provided by voluntary subscription. There is no unemployed register maintained in the town.

SEVENOAKS URBAN DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 7,610. Assessable Value (1892–93), £44,475.

Letter from *H. M. Miller*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. IN St. John's District there has been exceptional distress, caused by stress of weather, which has, so ar as I can learn, been adequately met by voluntary, united, and systematic contributions.

2. For the week ended Thursday, 21st February, from St. John's Hall, 320 quarts of soup, and more than 200 loaves of bread; from the Special Relief Office, 132, High-street, 460 loaves, 500 coal tickets, 150 grocery tickets, and several tickets to non-residents for food at Lime Tree Coffee Tavern. 250 families have been relieved; most of the bread-winners were found to be out of work, and they have all been helped in proportion to their need. Our list has been carefully examined by the Countess Amherst's Committee, and compared with other lists to avoid overlapping. Our Special Relief Office will only be open three days next week, viz., Monday, Thursday, and Saturday, from two to four in the afternoon. St. John's Hall Soup Kitchen will also be open on Tuesday and Friday from 12 to 1 o'clock.

3. No unemployed register kept by the authority, but one is kept by a committee in the St. John's District.

4. It is proposed that the Chairman of the Council should call a meeting of the inhabitants early in the month of November, to consider what steps shall be taken to relieve any distress that may arise during the winter.

SHELF URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,612. Assessable Value (1892–93), £6,222.

Letter from *W. J. Chambers*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no very exceptional distress; most of the inhabitants are employed in the mills and in farming.

2. A number of the unemployed have been engaged in clearing the snow away from the roads.

3. An unemployed register is not kept.

SIDMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 3,758. Assessable Value (1892–93), £12,234.

Letter from *J. M. Miller*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THE amount of distress in this place this winter, among the fishermen, has been somewhat greater than usual, in consequence of the partial failure of the herring fishery, from which in the months of November, December, and January, they usually earn good wages. This year the catches off this place have been small, and the prices obtained for the fish much lower than usual. During the recent prolonged frost there have been several masons, labourers, and gardeners out of work, but as the thaw has now commenced all these will next week be at work again.

2. Subscriptions

2. Subscriptions have been made; a soup kitchen has been opened; soup, bread, and groceries have been distributed among those out of work, but no public works have been commenced to afford employment to those out of work, for no work was available, in the form of cleaning streets, &c., and the frost was too hard for any earth work.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The question is one of considerable complexity, and it is difficult to make any suggestions for the relief of the distress among the fishermen, who are very indolent and improvident, and unwilling to accept work foreign to their own occupation; while in so small a town as Sidmouth there is little work to be found that is applicable to masons, gardeners, and labourers, or that can be undertaken in hard frost.

Slough Urban District (Buckingham).

Population (1891), 5,426. Assessable Value (1892-93), £27,743.

Letter from *G. H. Charsley*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. The Chairman is not aware that there is any exceptional distress in the district, although, owing to the severe weather, workmen connected especially with the building trade are at present without employment.

2. There appears to have been no call at present for any direct steps to be taken by any public authority in the matter; but there exists a parochial fund, supported by voluntary contributions, from which relief is distributed in the form of coal and food for the year, during severe weather.

3. No unemployed register is kept, nor does there appear to be a call for any such.
The Chairman desires to add that, owing to this Council being at present engaged in extensive sewerage works, which have not altogether been stopped by the frost, the contractors have found employment for a good many local workmen, who might otherwise have been in some distress.

South Gosforth Urban District (Northumberland).

Population (1891), 6,674. Assessable Value (1892-93), £24,114.

Letter from *D. Hetherington*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. The distress here can scarcely be called exceptional, except such as every hard winter brings. But it is not so extensive as we have known it before.

2. It has been dealt with by voluntary agencies, and without much effort.

3. We have no unemployed register; it has never been deemed necessary.

4. A little power might be placed in the hands of the Guardians of each parish, to act with the Relieving Officer in cases such as we have here. I think this would meet the case; but not to pauperise the receiver.

Southowram Urban District (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 3,058. Assessable Value (1892-93), £8,363.

Letter from *Rev. G. E. Aspinall*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. There is a certain amount of distress in this district, due to the severity of the weather, most of the working population being employed in the stone quarries.

2. A relief committee was formed by the District Council on 7th February, and other persons have since been added to it. The number of cases relieved during the week ended 16th February was 134. I may add that, in addition to the work of the committee, soup is being distributed every week by voluntary agents.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. There are no further suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving distress. It is believed that the funds at the disposal of the committee are sufficient to enable it to deal with it satisfactorily. The fact that many of the quarrymen having members of their families in work at the factories renders the distress less acute.

Southwick Urban District (Durham).

Population (1891), 10,226. Assessable Value (1892-93), £24,362.

Letter from *R. Thompson*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

There is exceptional distress in the district, due to depression in trade, but a large percentage is due to the stoppage of work in consequence of the severity of the weather.
To meet the distress a relief committee was formed about a month ago, and funds were liberally subscribed, out of which groceries have been distributed weekly, and the children have been supplied with free breakfasts daily. During the week ended 16th instant 300 families, at least, received supplies of groceries, and over 500 children had free breakfasts daily. A number of the unemployed have been engaged by the Urban District Council in removing snow, &c., from the streets and roads.

There is no unemployed register for the district.

It does not appear that the Urban District Council will be able to find further immediate employment for those who require it; but, as the weather is now milder, it is hoped that the number of the unemployed will rapidly lessen, and so reduce the present demands on the agencies at work for their relief.

SOYLAND URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,308. Assessable Value (1892-93), £11,154.

Letter from *J. H. Stead*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress, the industries of the neighbourhood being chiefly textile, paper, &c.

2. There has been nothing to warrant any such effort.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. We have hardly any real poor in Soyland, and we are quite prepared to render the assistance required.

STAINES URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 5,060. Assessable Value (1892-93), £25,304.

Letter from *J. A. Engall*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

IN consequence of the heavy floods in November last and the late severe frost, a good deal of distress has arisen in the district, but this has been fully met by local efforts; and, as no representation has been made on the subject to the Council, they have not had to consider any question of remedial measures.

STANHOPE URBAN DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 1,864. Assessable Value (1892-93), £2,636.

Letter from *J. W. Roddam*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE has been some want of employment caused by the severe weather, but not sufficient to cause any pressing exceptional distress.

2. Such distress as there has been has been to some extent relieved by public subscription, as well as a contribution from a Miners' Fund.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

STOW-ON-THE-WOLD URBAN DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 1,525. Assessable Value (1892-93), £2,862.

Letter from *J. Cox*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, and it arises mainly from the severe weather.

2. This distress has been relieved by voluntary agencies, about 230 people being relieved daily with soup, bread, and fish.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

4. I would suggest that the Guardians and their Relieving Officers should be empowered to give prompt relief in very urgent cases of destitution without interfering with the franchise, or requiring a medical certificate.

TIPTON URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 29,314. Assessable Value (1892-93), £69,621.

Letter from *G. M. Waring*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is at the present time exceptional distress in the district, owing principally to the severe weather now prevailing, and the closing and dismantling of several large ironworks.

2. The district of Tipton is divided into wards, and the members of the District Council for each ward have organised relief committees, which are engaged in relieving the most necessitous cases from funds given by private individuals.

3. No register of the unemployed is maintained or kept.

4. The District Council is not in a position to make any suggestions for the relief of such distress beyond what is already being done, unless a grant was made by the Government to poor districts from the Consolidated Fund. The public authorities are powerless to give employment as suggested in your recent Circular*, in consequence of the long-continued and severe frost practically stopping all out-door work.

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* *See* note * on page 87.

TODMORDEN URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 24,725. Assessable Value (1892–93), £80,616.

Letter from *D. Sutcliffe*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

I AM instructed to forward the enclosed appeal on behalf of the unemployed, and to refer you to my letter dated the 11th May 1893 as to works which the Board then were, and the Council still are, desirous of carrying out.

There certainly is too much distress in the district, and this is not altogether due to the weather. There is a lack of out-door employment, and if the Local Government Board would fall in with the suggestions of my letters of the 11th May 1893 and the 22nd December 1892, employment would be found for a considerable number of labourers. The sewer referred to might, perhaps, be completed by the time that you are prepared to sanction the larger scheme for completely dealing with the sewerage and sewage disposal of the district, which you have had before you for a considerable time.

The Council are unable to see what they can do to meet the distress, except on the lines indicated in my above-named letters. There is not an unemployed register maintained. Considerable sums have been spent in private charity, in addition to what appears in the list sent herewith.

(Appeal on behalf of the Unemployed who are thrown Out of Work by the Frost, above referred to.)

FELLOW TOWNSMEN,—Allow us to thank you on behalf of the people who have suffered for a number of weeks past. We can assure you that the help you so kindly rendered by your subscriptions last week has filled many stomachs which would otherwise have been empty; but it is more particularly on behalf of the children that we have been and are pleading, and we feel sure that you will consider yourself amply repaid when you know the money you have subscribed has been justly applied. On a perusal of the balance-sheet you will observe that we have paid to heads of families a fair proportion of the money subscribed, and we earnestly hope you will continue your subscriptions to the end of the storm. We also wish to point out to those who are concerned that if they apply at No. 17, Back Brook-street, they can be accommodated with any class of out-door workers. We wish, also, to call your attention to the fact that on Saturday evening, the 23rd of February, at eight o'clock, there will be a sale of half-a-ton of fish by public auction, the proceeds of which will be devoted to the relief fund. The fish will be given by the Hull salesman who visits our town weekly, and we hope it will be disposed of.

Again thanking you, yours on behalf of the Unemployed,

W. Calvert.
A. Howorth.
C. W. Widdup.

Subscriptions received and expended - - - - £32 11*s.* 4*d.*

TONG URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 6,890. Assessable Value (1892–93), £10,735.

Letter from *M. B. Newell*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district by reason of the closing of several large works in the district, and, in a lesser degree, to the severe weather.

2. The district authority have found work at the sewerage works for 50 men per day in emptying sludge-tanks, &c., these men working in shifts of 25, three hours per day, and being paid at the rate of 4*d.* per hour. There are, in addition, two voluntary agencies in the district relieving distress, viz., The Holme Lane Congregational Chapel Soup Kitchen, at which about 300 persons have been relieved daily during the week ended Saturday, 15th February; and the Tong-street Church Relief Committee, which has relieved, during the same period, about 80 persons daily. In addition to these, numerous persons have been relieved by private individuals.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The only suggestion that can be made for the relief of such distress is the opening out of relief works which the District Council have already under their consideration, and the foundation of relief committees to receive and distribute public subscriptions.

TRING URBAN DISTRICT (HERTFORD).

Population (1891), 4,525. Assessable Value (1892–93), £11,658.

Letter from *F. Butcher*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE has been exceptional distress in the district owing to the severe weather.

2. Nothing has been done by public authorities of an exceptional kind to give employment, which was impossible. Lord Rothschild, the principal employer of labour in the district, has given work to 75 or 80 men through the winter, who would otherwise almost certainly have been without it, which greatly prevents destitution. This Lord Rothschild has done for several years to a larger number, not because he wanted the labour of the men, but for their benefit.

3. There is no register of the unemployed maintained.

4. I have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving distress. The great want of thrift and carefulness amongst the poor when they have employment is very marked and must be held accountable for much.

TYLDESLEY-WITH-SHAKERLEY URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 12,891. Assessable Value (1892–93), £45,323.

Letter from *H. Morris*, Assistant Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is not any exceptional distress beyond what is occasioned by the severity of the weather, and this, it is expected, will pass away with more favourable weather.

2. It has not been found necessary to organise any special means of relief, either by this authority or by voluntary agencies.

3. No register is kept of the unemployed, the latter being more particularly the result of a labour dispute at present existing.

ULVERSTON URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 10,015. Assessable Value (1892–93), £35,782.

Letter from *J. Poole*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress within the district of the Council other than arising from the severe weather.

The deserving cases are being fairly met by the assistance of the masters and others.

There are no works at present being required to be carried out within the district of the Council of the kind named in the Circular* of the 11th February, except the completion of a road and for additional sanction to a loan, application has been made to the Local Government Board, and when this is received the work will be proceeded with and will find work for a number of ordinary labourers.

WALLASEY URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 33,229. Assessable Value (1892–93), £159,573.

Letter from *W. Danger*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THIS district is not to any extent composed of the working or poorer class, and the distress which prevails is attributable to the stoppage of building and other work, the result of the severe weather.

2. The distress is met by voluntary agencies, such as soup kitchens, &c., but the numbers assisted are not known.

3 and 4. No unemployed register is kept, and my Council are engaging as many of the unemployed as possible on the roads and other works under its control.

WALTON-ON-NAZE URBAN DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 1,586. Assessable Value (1892–93), £4,278.

Letter from *J. W. Eagle*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress here. About 30 men have been turned out of Messrs. Warner's Foundry. Some of these have found work at other places.

2. Nothing is being done excepting usual private charities.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make

WANTAGE URBAN DISTRICT (BERKS).

Population (1891), 3,669. Assessable Value (1892–93), £10,432.

Letter from *E. Ormond*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is not more exceptional distress in the district than is usual during the winter and severe weather.

2. Coal, soup, &c., have been distributed to nearly all the poor widows and poor persons who have needed relief.

3. No unemployed register has been kept.

4. No suggestions can be made for those who can and will not work. Nineteen unemployed men were standing in the Market Place on Wednesday last, and it was stated that only about three men could be called unemployed, as the others usually cared not for constant employment, and preferred two days' work per week and good wages.

**See* note * on page 87.

WARE URBAN DISTRICT (HERTFORD).

Population (1891), 5,256. Assessable Value (1892–93), £19,442.

Letter from *G. H. Gisby*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

IN continuation of my letter to you of the 20th instant, I have now ascertained that for the week ended Saturday, the 16th February, the following relief was given on account of the exceptional distress in this district, mainly caused by the stoppage of the River Lea by frost. By the Emergency Relief Committee 2,808 pints of soup and 1,837 quarterns of bread were given to 300 heads of families between 9th February and 21st February. By the Rev. A. Oates, Vicar of Christ Church, tea and sugar was given to 120 poor women, and twice in the week soup and bread was supplied to between 60 and 70 unemployed, and on two other days halfpenny dinners were given to about 150 children, the halfpenny being remitted in cases of children of unemployed. Coals have also been distributed to the poor people during the cold weather. In the parish of St. Mary free dinners were given to about 120 children twice during the week ended 16th February. There has also been a considerable distribution of coals, soup, &c., throughout the parish of St. Mary. All this points to there being exceptional distress in this district, but, as I have before stated, I think the cause of it is merely temporary cessation of work owing to the frost, and immediately the river is clear the number of unemployed persons here will be very small indeed. I might add that 175*l.* in money was given to the poor of the town by the feoffees of the Ware Charity Estates during the last week.

WATERLOO WITH SEAFORTH URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 17,225. Assessable Value (1892–93), £79,078.

Letter from *M. J. Parry*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district, other than that occasioned by the stoppage of out-door employment during the last few weeks owing to the severe weather.

2. Occasionally extra labourers have been employed by the Council, as required. There are several denominational agencies at work, affording relief in the way of soup, bread, and coal, the average daily number relieved during the week ended the 16th February being, as far as can be ascertained, about 868 persons.

WESTBURY-ON-SEVERN URBAN DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 2,005. Assessable Value (1892–93), £7,759.

Letter from *M. Hart*, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no distress of an exceptional character. There are a few men who have not had regular employment, but the farmers have employed them as far as possible, so that at present the Poor Law is quite competent to deal with it.

WHITCHURCH AND DODINGTON URBAN DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 4,794. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. T. Harrison*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. EXCEPTIONAL distress has prevailed and continues to prevail in this locality, on account of the extreme severity of the winter and its consequent effects on all branches of business in which manual labour is employed.

2. In order to alleviate as far as possible this distress a committee has been formed and subscriptions invited—an invitation which has been most liberally responded to—for the purpose of supplying soup, coal, groceries, &c., to families in actual want. Ladies and gentlemen of all denominations have kindly undertaken the work of finding out such cases by systematic visiting from house to house. The soup kitchen is open three days a week, and on those days all who bring a basin are supplied with a liberal allowance of soup to be consumed on the premises. I am glad to say that a large number of children, averaging about 180, have availed themselves of this opportunity of obtaining a fairly substantial meal at least three times a week. A number of adults have also been similarly supplied, and a liberal distribution of soup for consumption in the homes of the recipients has also been made by ticket. The number of coal and grocery tickets issued last week was over 200. The population of this Urban District is 4,794. We, the Urban District Council, have instructed our Surveyor to find employment of some kind as far as practicable for our *employés*, both permanent and occasional, at the ordinary rate of wages.

3. No register of the unemployed is kept by this Authority.

4. I am aware that work in the shape of stone-breaking is provided for all who apply for it by the Poor Law officers, on the premises at the Union Workhouse. I am informed, however, that the wage to be earned at this work in hard frost is an extremely small one, and I should be glad to learn that a little more latitude in the matter of pay had been given to that Authority. It is a cause of great regret to me personally that applications for this occasional employment should entail the disfranchisement of the applicant, and, though I have had no opportunity of speaking to my colleagues on this subject, I venture to say that most—probably all—of them share with me this feeling of regret.

WHITLEY AND MONKSEATON URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 3,008. Assessable Value (1892-93), £14,732.

Letter from *A. Whitehorn*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is very little exceptional distress, and what there is is consequent upon the recent severe weather, which stopped the building operations of this district, of which there is a considerable quantity going on. This district being mainly residential is not so much affected by dulness of trade as an industrial community would be.

The hinds engaged in agricultural pursuits in this district being mostly hired on a yearly or half-yearly engagement, and resident on the farms, are not so much affected by the severe weather as those engaged by the day or week would be.

2. I understand our lady Guardian for Whitley parish has been active in helping any who she considers needful from voluntary subscriptions furnished to her, but it has not been considered necessary that this Council or any other public agency should take any extraordinary steps.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained in this district. In fact, in normal weather conditions there is more work than men willing to do it.

4. This Council have no suggestion to make on this head.

WHITTINGTON URBAN DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 8,798. Assessable Value (1892-93), £9,035.

Letter from *G. Senior*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no extraordinary distress in the parish except through the weather, and this does not affect more than 1 per cent. of our population. Some of the most needy cases are being relieved by private efforts. I may add that we have not many out-door labourers.

WILLINGTON QUAY URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 7,345. Assessable Value (1892-93), £——.

Letter from *W. S. Daglish*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

THE Board has already purchased road metal for the purpose of giving employment to men out of work, and we have also ordered a ship load of the same material, with the same object, and we are doing such other repairs as are convenient or possible.

We are distributing 906 pints of soup daily, with 29 stones of bread to the workmen and their families; we are also providing 300 children with free breakfasts daily, Sunday included, with 500 six-ounce buns per day to the same, at a cost of about 40*l.* per week.

WINSFORD URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 10,440. Assessable Value (1892-93), £44,738.

Letter from *J. H. Cooke*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district except such as is due to the severity of the weather.

2. The distress referred to is being met by voluntary agencies and occasional gifts. There is no systematic form of relief, it is not considered necessary.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained. About two years ago we attempted to form such a register, but only about a dozen names were returned. We also advertised for workmen at 2*s.* 10*d.* per day, but some of the Trades Union officials objected to their working at that figure.

4. The Committee have no additional suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving the distress referred to, which they do not think to be serious at present.

WORSLEY URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 10,992. Assessable Value (1892-93), £——.

Letter from *F. H. Booth*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. WE have suffered considerably of late, owing to short time at many of the collieries in the district, and there is additional distress of a temporary character owing to the severe frost.

2. Nothing.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

I have had consultations before writing the above with employers of labour, with leading miners and with the Relieving Officer.

YSTRADYFODWG URBAN DISTRICT (GLAMORGAN).

Population (1891), 88,351. Assessable Value (1892–93), £336,692.

Letter from *W. Jenkins*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district to my knowledge. This is a coal mining district, and the collieries are on the whole working fairly regular, making about five days a week. There is an exception to this state of things, applicable to a small population of a few thousand, where the collieries have been on stop for the last two or three years, the men from that district having gone to work to other districts. The long-continued frost undoubtedly affects out-door labour. There is comparatively little of that class of labour in the whole district.

2. There is nothing being done by the public authorities to deal with the assumed distress. Voluntary agencies provide soup on a small scale. At one of these centres I am informed that about 100 parties are supplied with soup daily.

3. There is no unemployed register kept in the district to my knowledge.

4. No suggestions to make, having in view the relieving of distress, other than what exist at present, nor do I think there is any necessity for anything exceptional to deal with it.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

ABERGAVENNY RURAL DISTRICT (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 9,101. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. M. Jones*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress from want of employment.

ALDERBURY RURAL DISTRICT (WILTS).

Population (1891), 12,894. Rateable Value (1892-93), £69,655.

Letter from *F. Hodding*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

THERE has been some distress in the district on account of the recent severe weather, but not to such an extent as to render it necessary to take any public steps, voluntary efforts on the part of philanthropic individuals having done all that is necessary.

No unemployed register has been maintained, and, so far as this district is concerned, there is no necessity to make any suggestion, as it is hoped that the weather having improved, matters will be as they were before the severe frost commenced.

AMERSHAM RURAL DISTRICT (BUCKINGHAM).

Population (1891), 10,663. Rateable Value (1892–93), £46,644.

Letter from *G. Weller*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the above district.

2. Nothing has been done either by public authorities or voluntary agencies to meet any distress, as it was considered nothing was urgently needed.

3. No unemployed register has been kept.

4. I have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving distress, as the weather is now much milder and the frost disappearing.

ASHBOURNE RURAL DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 10,632. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *F. Wright*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

THERE does not appear to be any exceptional distress.

No unemployed register kept that I am aware of.

AYLSHAM RURAL DISTRICT (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 17,452. Rateable Value (1892–93), £105,155.

Letter from *H. J. Gidney*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE does not appear to be any exceptional distress in this district.

3. There is no unemployed register.

BARNET, SOUTH MIMMS RURAL DISTRICTS (HERTFORD). (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), Barnet, 4,342. South Mimms, 2,966. Rateable Value (1892-93), £67,705.

Letter from *J. Osmond*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, due, I believe, entirely to the very severe weather.

2. I have reason to believe that the charitable organisations which exist in the various parishes are working most actively to render assistance wherever it is needed, but I have no information as to the number of persons assisted by them. During the week ended Saturday, the 16th instant, six able-bodied men were admitted to the labour-yard at the Workhouse, and received out-relief for themselves and their six wives and 24 children.

3. An unemployed register is not kept in this district.

4. The unprecedented severity of the weather, at the same time that it has caused great distress among the poor, has rendered it almost impossible for employers of labour or for local authorities to put work in hand upon which unskilled labour could have been employed, so far as my observation extends. In many branches of farm labour work has been entirely suspended, and the same may be said of the building trade and out-door work generally.

The above observations with respect to the conditions of things in the Barnet Rural District apply also to the district of the South Mimms Rural District Council (of which I am Chairman as well), and with respect to the latter district I have only to add that during last week the number of able-bodied men employed at the labour-yard at the Workhouse and residing within the South Mimms Rural District was 4, with 4 wives and 11 children dependent upon them.

BARTON REGIS RURAL DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 13,183. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *A. Hapley*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

As far as I have been able to ascertain, there is not any exceptional distress in the district of this Council.

BERKHAMPSTEAD RURAL DISTRICT (HERTFORD AND BUCKINGHAM).

Population (1891), 10,485. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *S. Stallon*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. EXCEPTIONAL distress did, during the recent severe frost, prevail among the labourers whose work was almost entirely stopped thereby.

2. During the week ended Saturday, the 16th, a number of men in Berkhampstead went from house to house under a banner inscribed "Unemployed," and made a collection, which they divided.

3. An unemployed register has not been maintained.

4. The Guardians were prepared, had the distress continued, to give to each family applying, where the head was out of work, a loaf of bread for each child, temporary relief, and to report same for your sanction, as on a former occasion. The weather having broken, the normal conditions regulating relief to the poor will probably be sufficient. Voluntary agencies in this Union have largely helped to alleviate the distress, and the Guardians are about to apply for your order putting in force in this Union the provisions of the out-door labour-test order in future.

BERWICK-ON-TWEED RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891) 6,368. Rateable Value (1892–93) £72,542.

Letter from *W. Crossman*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

IN the district of this Council there has been no exceptional distress, and there has been no necessity to make any arrangements by voluntary arrangements, or by the public authorities, to supply work. There is no unemployed register maintained. There being no exceptional distress, I have no suggestions to make.

BINGHAM RURAL DISTRICT (NOTTINGHAM).

Population (1891), 13,783. Rateable Value (1892-93), £ ———.

Letter from *R. H. Beaumont*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.

BLANDFORD RURAL DISTRICT (DORSET).

Population (1891), 9,690. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *Rev. J. Penny*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE are 34 parishes in the Blandford Union, of which 33 are rural. In the rural parishes there have been no indications whatever of unusual distress. In the town of Blandford, however, the distress has been exceptionally great during the last month. This has been chiefly due to the severe weather; but partly to the circumstance that the completion of a large building in the neighbourhood, and then of some waterworks, in which many were engaged for several years, has left a number of hands without regular employment. The sittings of the Blandford Board of Guardians generally last from an hour-and-a-half to two hours. On Saturday, the 16th of February, on account of the numerous applications for relief from able-bodied men, the sitting lasted 4½ hours. These men numbered 36, of all ages between 23 and 47: with their wives and children they represented 131 in the Relief Application Book. The following, giving the numbers receiving out-relief of some sort, will show the growth of the increase since the beginning of the year :—

January 5th - - - - - -	422	February 2nd - - - - - -	602
„ 19th - - - - - -	521	„ 16th - - - - - -	692

2. The Mayor of Blandford will, no doubt, state what has been done by public subscription as well as by individuals in providing coals and food, especially soup. The Guardians, in no case, except where there was sickness, gave direct out-door relief, but instructed the Relieving Officer to pay repeated visits to the houses of all the able-bodied mentioned above, and to see that none suffered from absolute want—paying especial attention to the wives and children. He also co-operated with and assisted the other agencies engaged in alleviating distress. When direct out-relief was refused, an order for the house was offered and made out, but as there was little likelihood of the latter being accepted, the Relieving Officer was directed to watch each case carefully.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. We hope that the worst is over. About a dozen of the above men have been employed this week in getting out of the river accumulations of flint and gravel brought down by floods. The masons and carpenters are also beginning to take on labourers; and when the frost is out of the ground, it is intended by the District Council to employ still more in removing obstructions in some of the smaller watercourses.

BLOFIELD RURAL DISTRICT (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 12,025. Rateable Value (1892-93), £83,519.

Letter from *R. King*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

WE have no exceptional distress in our district, it being purely agricultural, and the farmers, as a rule, are too kindhearted to discharge any of their hands when severe weather sets in, more often doing all kinds of exceptional work rather than turn men off, as tradesmen are compelled to do in towns and cities.

BOLTON RURAL DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 31,665. Rateable Value (1892-93), £171,130.

Letter from *S. Cooper*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is, and has been, exceptional distress in the district, but not due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, but to the severity of the season.

2. Such distress has been very materially met by voluntary agencies.

3. The Council are not aware that an unemployed register is maintained; and believe that with the termination of the severe weather there will be no cause for further solicitude.

BOURNE RURAL DISTRICT (PARTS OF KESTEVEN).

Population (1891), 18,696. Rateable Value (1892-93), £137,648.

Letter from *T. Pick*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THE distress is not exceptional, but the condition of agriculture has conduced to the throwing out of employment of more labourers than usual, and the severe weather has helped to increase the number.

2. Public authorities have not found it necessary to take any unusual steps, as the Poor Laws have been adequate to meet such cases as have occurred. Private charities have provided supplies of soup, bread, coal, and other necessaries.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. In this district which is purely agricultural, the first remedy is to make the land again worth cultivating.

Braintree Rural District (Essex).

Population (1891), 19,734. Rateable Value (1892-93), £94,618.

Letter from *J. Smithson*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. There has been, and still is, a considerable amount of distress in the district for the past six weeks, but this is very largely due to the severe weather, the men out of work being mostly builders and brick-makers, who have work to go to when the weather breaks, and also a few young single agricultural labourers, who at the best of times are not very fond of work.

2. Nothing is being done in the district beyond private help and the ordinary action of the Poor Law Guardians.

3. No register is maintained.

4. The only suggestion we, as agriculturists, or as being connected with the land, can offer is that in order to keep the labourers on the land, either the price of the produce must be raised, or what I consider more practicable, is to considerably reduce the present burdens in the shape of Tithe, Land Tax, Poor and Highway Rate, &c. In many instances farms in this district are taxed so that the owner's or landlord's interest in the shape of net rent has become extinct. There is a very general stream of the best of our labourers to London and the North, and this is rapidly increasing.

Branston Rural District (Parts of Kesteven).

Population (1891), 14,185. Rateable Value (1892-93), £ ———.

Letter from *W. R. Danby*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. The Council do not consider that there is any exceptional distress in the district beyond that caused by the exceptionally severe weather.

2. Notices have been sent to the Surveyors of Highways in each parish, suggesting the desirability of employing those out of work, in any quarries or gravel pits there may be in the parishes. No record is kept of the daily number relieved.

3. No register of the unemployed is kept.

4. The Council have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving distress.

Bridgend and Cowbridge Rural District (Glamorgan).

Population (1891), 20,425. Rateable Value (1892-93), £149,544.

Letter from *J. B. Jenkins*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

There is no severe distress in this district, as the collieries have been working fairly well. The distress is chiefly in the large towns amongst men of the building trades, not in the country districts. No steps have been taken as no applications have been made.

No unemployed register is maintained.

Burnley Rural District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 14,544. Rateable Value (1892-93), £133,737.

Letter from *J. Race*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

There is no exceptional distress in the district of the Burnley Rural District Council.

Chailey Rural District (East Sussex).

Population (1891), 10,098. Rateable Value (1892-93), £62,430.

Letter from *R. M. Beard*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. There has not during the past four or five months been any exceptional distress in the Chailey Union district. The relief allowed by the Guardians has been much less than it was during the corresponding period of 1893-94.

2. The ordinary cases of distress have been met in the usual way—viz., by the Guardians of the Union and by the gentry and other generous residents in the district. The number of persons relieved by the Guardians during the week ended the 16th of February instant was 249, as against 308 in the corresponding week of last year. I cannot say how many have been relieved by voluntary agencies.

3. It has not been found necessary to keep an unemployed register so far as the Chailey Union District is concerned.

CHERTSEY RURAL DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 10,091. Rateable Value (1892-93), £ ———.

Letter from *H. C. Leigh Bennett*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is a larger amount of distress than usual among the agricultural population, owing to the severe weather and the reduced ability of farmers to employ labour.

2. The Board of Guardians of the Chertsey Union have opened a labour yard for granite-breaking at the workhouse, paying each man per diem 1*s.* in money, and groceries (not exceeding 1*s.*) and bread according to the size of his family. In the week ended 16th February 19 men attended the labour yard from this Rural District, representing in families 79 persons. Of these men 18 were from the parish of Chobham, and one from the parish of Windlesham.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. I believe the present distress is being coped with by the above method combined with the Poor Law and local charity; but the provision of one labour yard only involves long journeys. After 25th March 1895 this District Council will have control of the roads, and in future years it might be well to provide a special reserve of road metal at local depôts, to be broken in times of frost by men out of work. The fact that road employment in these villages has often been of a semi-charitable nature lessens one possible objection.

CHESTER-LE-STREET RURAL DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 50,594. Rateable Value (1892-93), £206,323.

Letter from *G. Ridley*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is comparatively little distress from want of employment in this district. The chief industry is coal mining, and operations have been suspended at only two collieries in the district, where the miners receive an allowance from the funds of the Miners' Association for the County of Durham, of which they are members. The severity of the weather since December last has deprived many masons and masons' labourers of employment, which is not unusual at this season of the year, but any cases of distress have been amply met by private means.

2. Nothing has been required to meet the distress by public authorities or by voluntary agencies, except as above mentioned, and the average daily number relieved by the latter means during the week ended 16th instant would not exceed 400.

3. An unemployed register is not kept.

4. On the advice of the District Council I have to suggest that the Local Government Board should obtain powers to authorise Boards of Guardians, on the recommendation of District Councils and Municipal Corporations, to grant temporary assistance in cases of emergency to persons in distress from want of employment, such assistance to be given in kind within certain defined limits as to amount, and by way of loan, without having the effect of disfranchising the recipients. For the last two months, owing to the severity of the weather, it has been impossible for local authorities in rural districts to provide employment, as nearly all out-door operations have been suspended.

CHRISTCHURCH RURAL DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 12,442. Rateable Value (1892-93), £59,790.

Letter from *A. Druitt*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is not any very exceptional distress in the rural district. What distress there is is caused by the severe weather.

2. The Guardians have met any exceptional cases by increasing the weekly payments made to applicants for out-door relief. The relief given to out-door paupers has also been increased by 6*d.* per head for the past six weeks. The returns for the week ended the 16th instant do not show that there is any exceptional distress in this Union. The number of people relieved in the workhouse was 245, as compared with 254 in the corresponding week of last year. The number in receipt of out-door relief was 706, as compared with 616 last year, but the increase is not sudden but has been gradual. In the populous villages of Pokesdown and Winton the distress has been met by voluntary agencies. I have not been able to obtain any particulars from Pokesdown Relief Fund Committee; but at Winton applicants were given tickets for food and necessaries as follows:—

Monday, February	11th,	number relieved	36	Thursday, February	14th,	number relieved	32
Tuesday	12th	" "	21	Friday	15th	" "	45
Wednesday	13th	" "	183	Saturday	16th	" "	163

Or an average of 80 per diem.

3. No register of the unemployed is maintained.

CLEOBURY MORTIMER RURAL DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 5,911. Rateable Value (1892-93), £ ———.

Letter from *F. Burd*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

COOKHAM RURAL DISTRICT (BERKS).

Population (1891), 9,861. Rateable Value (1892-93), £81,184.

Letter from *C. Wodehouse*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

I AM not aware of any exceptional distress in this district. There are, as you are aware, in country districts a certain number of labourers who are always thrown out of work by long frosts such as we have just gone through, but I do not think that the number this year in this district has been more than usual. No unusual steps are being taken, either by public authorities or by voluntary agencies.

No unemployed register is maintained.

CROWMARSH RURAL DISTRICT (OXFORD).

Population (1891) 5,150. Rateable Value (1892-93, £ ——.

Letter from *O. P. King*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

No exceptional distress exists in this district, consequently nothing has been done or need be done, as the workhouse is not nearly full.

CULHAM RURAL DISTRICT (OXFORD).

Population (1891), 2,692. Rateable Value (1892-93), £ ———.

Letter from *B. Challenor*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district which calls for any interference on the part of this District Council.

DRIFFIELD RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, EAST RIDING).

Population (1891), 13,140. Rateable Value (1892-93), £111,605.

Letter from *H. Botterill*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is, in the opinion of the Chairman, no very exceptional distress in this district, though there are undoubtedly a good many persons out of employment, partly through agricultural depression and partly owing to the recent severe weather.

2. The highway authorities have, in several parishes, employed a number of men in clearing the snow; beyond this, the Chairman is not aware of anything that is being done by any public authority to provide employment. He can speak as to private or voluntary agencies; a body called the Charitable Society, in Great Driffield, does what it can to relieve exceptional distress in that town.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. The Chairman has no suggestions to make.

DROITWICH RURAL DISTRICT (WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 14,310. Rateable Value (1892-93), £114,950.

Letter from *A. J. Bearcroft*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the district, owing to the severity of the weather having prevented out-door labour.

2. The Corporation of Droitwich have opened a relief fund, but the District Council have no information as to the daily number relieved during the week ended the 16th instant.

3. No unemployed register is kept by the Rural District Council.

4. The Chairman suggests that local authorities should commence some public works, for the purpose of providing work for the unemployed.

EGHAM RURAL DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 10,187. Rateable Value (1891-92), £ ———.

Letter from *B. Tice*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress at the present time in this district, viz., the parish of Egham, arising, in the first place, from great depression in trade, especially in the building line; and, secondly, from the terrible severity of the weather during the past month, which has thrown out of employment a number of able-bodied men, who were engaged in building and ground work.

2. To

2. To meet the exceptional distress, measures have been taken, by voluntary agencies, to establish soup kitchens and free dinners to needy school children; gifts of coal have been distributed, and special funds provided by generous donors for giving special relief to the sick and destitute.

During the week ended Saturday, 16th February 1895:—

10 tons of coal were given away in quantities of 1 and 2 cwts.
700 loaves of bread were distributed from a Bread Relief Fund.
150 gallons of soup were distributed.
1,500 dinners were supplied to poor children.
100 families received relief from a special Benevolent Fund.

I enclose some printed particulars of these voluntary agencies.

3. An unemployed register has been kept for some years past, the last Report of which I enclose.

4. The Egham District Council had this subject specially under consideration at their meeting on Monday last, and the only possible way in which it appeared to the Council they could find employment for able-bodied men while the ground (roads and paths especially) remained in a frozen condition, was to adopt a suggestion of their Surveyor and purchase several trucks of unbroken granite and flints suitable for road-making, and have it broken by hand-labour, thus affording some employment for starving able-bodied men. This material is expected to arrive to-day, and from the number of applications our Surveyor had yesterday from men willing to accept this kind of work, we hope that not a few destitute and starving families will obtain food and necessaries without the aid of further charitable relief. I fear, however, that notwithstanding the work just alluded to, and all the voluntary efforts made to alleviate the present distress, a considerable amount of hardship and privation will have to be borne by our working-class population till the weather breaks and trade revives.

(Documents referred to in above Letter).

1. Notice issued as to the Englefield Green Benevolent Fund, giving particulars as to the proceedings of the Committee and inviting contributions. The sum contributed up to the 18th February was 15*l.* 18*s.* 7*d.*, and relief had been afforded in coal and grocery to 86 families.

2. Public Poster Notice as to the Egham Bread Relief Fund, to the effect that, owing to the inclement weather, a distribution of bread, &c., would take place at Englefield Green every Saturday, and at Egham every Monday.

3. Notice issued, 7th February, by the Egham District Constitutional Club, that they would provide free dinners for poor children attending the schools in Egham, Englefield Green, and the Hythe, about 40 children of each school, on two days of each week.

4. Further Notice issued by same club that they were providing 400 dinners per week to the children in the schools, and that they had appointed a permanent Relief Committee to organise schemes for providing relief in all cases of sickness or distress by tickets for soup, coal, bread, &c.

5. Annual Report for 1894 of the Egham Free Registry and Employment Agency, from which it appears that 219 applications were received during that year, out of which employment was obtained for 123 persons.

6. Public Poster Notice of proposed soup kitchen, to provide soup as often as funds will permit, and inviting applicants to leave their names and addresses, to be examined by Committee.

7. Public Poster Notice as to proposed Benevolent Fund, to provide coal and other necessaries to the deserving poor in the district.

Fareham Rural District (Southampton).

Population (1891), 11,132. Rateable Value (1892-93), £56,634.

Letter from *H. Gibbings*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. In consequence of the severe weather there has been some slight distress in this Council's district; but generally throughout the district labourers have not been discharged through the recent severe frost.

2. As far as I can ascertain there has not been any organised voluntary agency to meet the slight distress.

3. There is not an unemployed register kept, so far as I am aware.

4. With reference to this inquiry I do not consider the distress sufficient to demand any public steps to be taken to relieve same, as the Board of Guardians have relieved necessitous cases.

Glendale Rural District (Northumberland).

Population (1891), 10,156. Rateable Value (1892-93), £115,138.

Letter from *G. Grey*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

There is no distress in my district. The agricultural population are paid upstanding wages, and weather does not affect those engaged on farms. The only unemployed are masons, who have been idle for eight weeks, but these, up to the time of ceasing work, were in receipt of 7*s.* a day wages, and are in a position to help themselves.

Uppingham Union { Gretton / Hallaton / Uppingham } Rural Districts { (Northampton) / (Leicester) / (Rutland) }.

Population (1891) { Gretton, 1,701 / Hallaton, 2,139 / Uppingham, 7,212 } Rateable Value (1892-93), £108,672.

Letter from *J. E. Willford*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

The subject was brought before a meeting of the Uppingham Board of Guardians by the Chairman of the Rural District Council of Uppingham, on Wednesday last, at which meeting the Chairman of the District Council of Gretton, also the Chairman of the District Council of Hallaton (both in the Union District) were present, and it was agreed that there is no exceptional distress in any one of the three Rural Districts in the Union to report to you.

Hailsham Rural District (East Sussex).

Population (1891), 14,144. Rateable Value (1892-93), £66,126.

Letter from *E. Catt, jun.*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

There is not any exceptional distress in this district peculiar to the locality or to the severe weather. At the Council meeting on the 20th instant, every parish in the district was represented, and in no instance was any information forthcoming as would indicate any exceptional distress. A few isolated cases of "out of employment" may be found, but in the majority of these it is due to other causes, and not from a scarcity of employment.

Hambledon Rural District (Surrey).

Population (1891), 18,428. Rateable Value (1892-93), £107,635.

Letter from *Y. Knowles*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

Very little distress from want of employment exists in this district, and what few isolated cases there may be are being dealt with locally. There will be plenty of employment as soon as the weather breaks.

Hartley Wintney Rural District (Southampton).

Population (1891), 24,521. Rateable Value (1892-93), £115,373.

Letter from *T. Kenward*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress, except in neighbourhood of Aldershot, owing to severe weather.

2. In most cases we have found work in gravel pits or roads.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. We can cope with the distress by finding work. We find but very few able-bodied men out of work in the agricultural districts.

Hitchin Rural District (Hertford and Bedford).

Population (1891), 13,111. Rateable Value (1892-93), £94,193.

Letter from *G. A. Passingham*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

There is no exceptional distress in the district. The Hertfordshire County Council has postponed the operation of Clause 25 of the Local Government Act, 1894 (so far as it relates to highways) for three years.

Hollingbourn Rural District (Kent).

Population (1891), 13,318. Rateable Value (1892-93), £85,010.

Letter from *G. Hurn*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

No exceptional distress in district. Nothing, therefore, being done by public authorities or voluntary agencies.

No unemployed register kept

No suggestions to make.

HOLSWORTHY RURAL DISTRICT (DEVON AND CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 8,942. Rateable Value (1892-93), £37,578.

Letter from *C. Bray*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. No cases of exceptional distress have come before the Council or Board of Guardians, and I am pleased to be able to report that only one able-bodied man has applied for assistance during the severe weather. It is true that a large number of masons in the district have had to cease their work; but in an agricultural district such as this is, the majority of such masons have their allotment to attend to, and many of them have obtained some sort of employment in connection with their trade.

2. Nothing has been done to meet the distress, as there has been no call on the authorities in this respect.

3. An unemployed register is not kept.

As has been observed already, there has not been any necessity for starting relief works in this district up to the present time, nor is there any likelihood of this being rendered necessary.

HORNCASTLE RURAL DISTRICT (PARTS OF LINDSEY).

Population (1891), 15,837. Rateable Value (1892-93), £124,920.

Letter from *R. Searby*, Vice-Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. So far as I know, there is no exceptional distress in this district. Artizans have certainly been out of work for some time owing to the storm, but they have not been destitute. Farm labourers, of whom the majority of the working class consists, have not been thrown out of work during the storm, as they have been required among the sheep and cattle, which have required greater attention than in mild weather.

2. This Council have taken no steps to meet the distress, because, so far, it has not been apparent, as is evidenced by the small number of applications for relief received by the Board of Guardians. I do not know of any relief afforded from voluntary agencies.

3. An unemployed register is not kept.

4. I have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving the distress.

ISLE OF WIGHT RURAL DISTRICT (ISLE OF WIGHT).

Population (1891), 29,449. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *F. Stratton*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the Isle of Wight, which is almost wholly due to the severity of the weather.

2. The Guardians of the Poor are endeavouring to meet the distress caused by want of employment by having works executed which have been for some time contemplated in the workhouse, and a circular letter has also been addressed by them to each of the public authorities in the Island asking them to take such steps as may be in their power to give employment to men out of work. It is impossible to give the average daily number relieved in this manner. Special efforts for the relief of distress are being made by a large number of charitable organisations throughout the Island.

3. No register of the unemployed is kept by the District Council or Guardians, but there are registers kept by some of the private charitable organisations.

4. The prevailing distress is more generally confined to the urban districts; and having in view the short period which must elapse before the termination of the frost, it is difficult to make any suggestion with regard to the finding employment for those out of work in the rural district.

KETTERING RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 9,802. Rateable Value (1892-93), £94,705.

Letter from *J. G. Willows*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district. There are undoubtedly many men connected with the building trade who are out of employment in consequence of the severe weather, but the staple trade of the district is the manufacture of boots and shoes, and this has been, and still continues, good.

KEYNSHAM UNION {KEYNSHAM / WARMLEY} RURAL DISTRICTS {(SOMERSET). / (GLOUCESTER).}

Population (1891) {Keynsham, 7,653 / Warmley, 13,118} Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *S. F. Andrews*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

IN some of the larger parishes of the Keynsham Union exceptional distress does exist, caused by the severity of the weather, not by circumstances peculiar to the district. Voluntary agencies have relieved a daily average of 350 to 400 cases. When the weather breaks, work will be resumed by a very large majority of them.

There is no unemployed register kept.

KINGSBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 13,234. Rateable Value (1892-93), £83,297.

Letter from *T. Adams*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this Union.

LYDNEY RURAL DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 8,153. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *R. B. Thomas*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is slight distress in this district, occasioned partly by the severe weather and partly by the stoppage of some paper works, employing considerable labour.

2. The Council have considered the matter, and have opened stone quarries, affording immediate employment to twelve men. In addition to this measure, considerable private charity exists in the district, and there is no very great urgency for further relief funds at the present moment. The Highway Board for the district are co-operating with the Council, and will meet on Wednesday next, and will open further quarries and provide further employment if requisite, after investigation.

3. A list is kept of the men who are employed and of those who seek employment, and with a satisfactory result. The Council are determined to find employment for every necessitous case.

4. I have no further circumstances to report, nor any suggestions to make.

MAIDSTONE RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 15,907. Rateable Value (1892-93), £96,068.

Letter from *L. J. W. Fletcher*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is some, but no very great exceptional distress, such being caused by recent severity of weather.

2. We have, ready-prepared, plans and preliminary preparations made since two years ago for certain works of no imposing character towards improvements of highways in several parts of our area, which it is hoped may afford employment of a non-pauperising and useful nature, and provide for the greater part of our area, should the state of the case seem to render it expedient to undertake such. As yet, however, there has not appeared to be occasion to warrant same, as for some few weeks past by voluntary agencies the need has been fairly met. In the Parish of Loose work in the stone quarry has been provided, the number so employed in week ended 16th instant being 52. On a smaller scale some rather similar work has been provided by the Rector of Barming for his parishioners who might need it; whilst farmers generally have endeavoured to keep on their regular hands, especially married men, and landowners have afforded employment to those in need.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. I think that our plan of having works ready prepared to be undertaken in case of need should be adequate to meet emergency. May I add that should present improvement in the weather continue there is every prospect of every decent workman in the district being able to get ample employment, as farm work has been rather thrown into arrear.

MARTLEY RURAL DISTRICT (WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 13,133. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. Essex*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. Nothing is being done.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

Melton Mowbray Rural District (Leicester).

Population (1891), 15,286. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *A. H. Marsh*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress except such as is natural from persons engaged in out-door labour being prevented from carrying on their usual occupation in consequence of the severe weather, and this does not prevail to any large, extent.

2. No concerted action has been taken to relieve the distress, but individual cases are relieved by voluntary agencies, and it is consequently impossible to give the numbers so relieved.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. No suggestions to make.

Meriden Rural District (Warwick).

Population (1891), 10,894. Rateable Value (1892-93), £97,104.

Letter from *A. Seymour*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

Beyond a temporary want of employment amongst agricultural labourers, owing to the prolonged frost, neither the District Council nor the Guardians have had any exceptional distress in the district brought to their notice. With the view of providing employment to some labourers who are out of work owing to the severe weather, the District Council have commenced some sewerage work in the Parish of Meriden, which is now in progress.

Newport Rural District (Salop).

Population (1891), ——. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *R. N. Heane*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. The distress is not exceptional in the district, and it is occasioned wholly by the severity of the weather preventing the usual outdoor employments being carried on as usual.

2. Nothing is being done by the public authorities, but relief is given where needed by a committee from funds obtained from private donations and subscriptions.

3. No unemployed register is maintained. There is no necessity for it.

4. No suggestions to make.

Petworth Rural District (West Sussex).

Population (1891), 9,431. Rateable Value (1892–93), £42,783.

Letter from *M. Taylor*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

We have no very severe cases of distress, the men principally are working in the copses converting underwoods, except those who are wanted upon the land to attend to stock. A few extra cases of sickness, owing probably to the very cold weather, have been met liberally by the Guardians.

Reeth Rural District (York, North Riding).

Population (1891), 3,217. Rateable Value (1892–93), £28,043.

Letter from *F. Garth*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

1. The exceptional distress in this district, so far as it is temporary, is agricultural, due at present partly to unfavourable weather, but permanently to the impossibility of competing with foreign products of the same kind in our own markets. The most important industry of the district formerly was lead mining, which employed a great proportion of the inhabitants; but, with about one exception, the lead mines have now been closed, and the miners have left the district to seek employment elsewhere. The district is now thinly populated and very poor.

2. Nothing

2. Nothing specially organised. Some agitation of the question of a light railway into the district. Voluntary charities, of which no record is kept.

3. The unemployed are chiefly tramps from and to neighbouring workhouses, and in reduced numbers in this inclement weather.

4. An entire change in the fiscal policy of the nation securing fair play for British rights and interests.

RICHMOND RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 8,418. Rateable Value (1892-93), £81,143.

Letter from *W. Hunton*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

THE Chairman is not aware of any exceptional distress in the district, either due to circumstances peculiar to the locality or to the severe weather.

ROTHBURY RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 6,083. Rateable Value (1892-93), £77,103.

Letter from *W. A. Watson-Armstrong*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is a certain amount of distress in Rothbury, owing to the extreme severity of the weather, which has prevented masons and other out-of-door labourers from doing any work since the beginning of the new year. There are however, only about eight or nine families who need relief. The district is a prosperous one, and no reason can be assigned for the distress but the extreme severity of the weather.

2. On Friday, the 15th instant, a meeting was called in Rothbury, under the auspices of the Parish Council, and presided over by the Rector of Rothbury, when it was decided to appeal for help to the inhabitants, and to open a central agency, from which relief, in the shape of coals, groceries and soup could be obtained. 11*l.* per week has been promised as long as the frost continues, and, in addition, there have been about 10*l.* in form of donations given. This is more than sufficient to meet all claims. Previous to the opening of the central agency, a great deal was done in private and unsystematic charity, the result being that some families were relieved three or four times over in a day by different parties, while one or two families got no relief.

3. There is no unemployed register kept, for the simple reason that, in ordinary weather, everybody in Rothbury is in full employment, with the exception of a few dissolute characters who do not wish for work.

4. The only suggestions that I have to make are that all relief should be distributed from a central agency, and that each case of distress should have careful investigation before relief is given, otherwise the distribution of relief may have a pauperising effect on the people relieved of a highly detrimental character.

SKIPTON RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 20,571. Rateable Value (1892-93), £142,348.

Letter from *T. P. Brown*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is distress in this district owing to the severe weather. A few men who worked on the Midland Railway have been discharged temporarily.

2. This Council has two drainage works in progress, but the severe weather prevents the men working. The Leeds and Liverpool Canal Company's rock workings re-commenced last week. During the week ended February 20, the Skipton Charity Organisation Society paid for children's breakfasts and in doles to adults, 22*l.*

3. No register of the unemployed is kept.

4. When the weather will permit I think there will be little to complain of here. There are no able-bodied men in the workhouse, whilst there were two a year ago. There are two men on out-door test labour, there were three a year ago. The Guardians have let contracts for casual wards, amounting to upwards of 800*l.*, and such work as the weather permits is in progress.

STANSTED RURAL DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 6,908. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *H. M. Oswald*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE has been some exceptional distress in this district, owing to labourers being out of employment from the long continuance of severe weather.

2. The Bishop Stortford Board of Guardians has met this distress by granting such relief as is by law permissible. This will be shown by the usual Poor Law Returns. Much has also been done through private charity, but I have no means of stating the amount.

3. I am unaware of the existence of any unemployed register.

4. I have no suggestions to make on the subject.

STONE RURAL DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 13,872. Rateable Value (1892–93), £137,557.

Letter from *R. Kenderdine*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

IN the Union generally there is distress of a somewhat exceptional character, caused by the present severe weather, as farm labourers, bricklayers, and other out-door labourers cannot work at their accustomed employment owing to the frost. In the town of Stone in particular the depression which has existed for some time, through the slackness of the boot and shoe trade (the staple trade of the town), is intensified by the severe weather. A public meeting was lately held at Stone to consider the question of relieving the distress, but the only business then done was the division between the clergy of the town of the balance of a relief fund raised two years ago. Nothing further has been done publicly, but there is no doubt that voluntary agencies are at work, although no records can be obtained. The Stone Urban District Council employed as many men as they conveniently could in removing the heavy fall of snow which occurred a few weeks ago, but no other public work has been done by that body. The claims upon the Board of Guardians have up to now been sufficiently met by the ordinary methods of relief.

I am not aware of any register of the unemployed in this Union.

For the relief of the present distress I can offer no suggestion, except that power should be given to Boards of Guardians to allow limited relief to able-bodied men without the imposition of test work, as work cannot possibly be found without causing a great expense, which would be useless when the weather breaks. For the future, my experience as a Surveyor of country highways leads me to suggest that as the District Councils are now, or are very soon, to have the charge of parish highways, they should at once begin to collect stocks of stones from the farmers in their respective neighbourhoods, so that when a time of distress occurs amongst outdoor labourers again the stones may be broken and used upon the roads, to the profit both of the labourers thus occupied and of the authorities supplying the occupation. If firewood cutting could be done by a District Council, so that the question of pauperism would not arise, it would, I think, be the next best means of employment.

STRATFORD AND WOLVERTON RURAL DISTRICT (BUCKINGHAM).

Population (1891), 6,824. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *G. E. Willes*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. IN this district the distress that has existed is caused almost entirely by the severe weather.

2. In consequence of distress existing in the Northamptonshire Parishes of the Potterspury Union (which, together with the Stony Stratford and Wolverton District, go to form the Potterspury Union), a special meeting of the Guardians was called, at which certain resolutions were passed, which I enclose, marked A and B; and a letter marked C was sent to the Overseer of every parish in the Potterspury Union. As a consequence of the resolution marked A, reliefs in kind, to the amount of 5*l*. 6*s*. 11*d*., was given to 89 recipients in the parishes of Calverton, Stony Stratford, East and West. In addition to this, a soup kitchen has been provided by private contributions in Stony Stratford. Soup is distributed three times in each week to 100—120 families on each occasion.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The distress in this district is only temporary, and will pass away with the break-up of the severe weather. The London and North Western Railway Works at Wolverton employ the larger proportion of the labour in the district.

(Extracts from the Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Guardians of the Poor of the Potterspury Union, held at the Board Room, Yardley Gobion, on Saturday, 9th February 1895).

A.

With regard to casual cases of destitution and starvation, it was resolved that it be recommended to the Overseers of the several parishes inthe Union to give orders in all cases of sudden and urgent necessity for relief in kind according to the following weekly scale :—

For Man and Wife only.	Extra for each Child.
7 loaves.	1 loaf.
¼ lb. tea.	1 lb. sugar.
2 lbs. sugar.	2 ozs. tea
1 cwt. coal.	½ lb. bacon
1½ lbs. bacon.	

which, upon being reported to the Relieving Officer, is to be paid for by him. This recommendation to hold good until Thursday next. The Clerk is directed to send a notice of such recommendation to the Overseers accordingly.

B.

Boat-men.—In the event of application being made to the Relieving Officer from any person of this class, resolved that relief in kind be administered if necessary, but on loan only.

C.

(Letter before referred to.)

Potterspury Union, Stony Stratford,
9 February 1895.

Dear Sirs,—I am directed by the Board of Guardians to inform you that at an extraordinary meeting held this day, it was resolved, in consequence of the severity of the weather, to recommend to the Overseers of the several parishes in the Union that in cases of sudden and urgent necessity orders should be given by them for relief in kind according to the following weekly scale :—

For Man and Wife only.	Extra for each Child.
7 loaves.	1 loaf.
¼ lb. tea.	1 lb. sugar.
2 lbs. sugar.	2 ozs. tea.
1 cwt. coal.	½ lb. bacon.
1½ lb. bacon.	

and report same forthwith to the Relieving Officer, who would pay for the relief granted on such scale. This recommendation is to hold good until Thursday next, when it will be reconsidered at the ordinary Board meeting.

I am, &c.,
W. R. Parrott,
Clerk.

Stroud Rural District (Gloucester).

Population (1891). 28,510. Rateable Value, (1892-93), £— —.

Letter from *E. Playne*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this district, due partly to the severe weather and partly to bad trade in various manufactories.

2. The distress is met by voluntary agencies and also by relief work carried out by the Stroud Urban District Council.

3. I do not know of any register of the unemployed being kept in this district.

4. The distress will be primarily relieved by open weather, but trade cannot be permanently benefited except by increased confidence in the desire of the Government to stimulate native industries by the removal of excessive and unfair foreign competition.

Sturminster Rural District (Dorset).

Population (1891), 9,583. Rateable Value (1892-93), £71,279.

Letter from *A. W. H. Creech*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

There has been no exceptional distress in this district, and the Council therefore considers it unnecessary to offer your Lordships any suggestions with regard to the relief of such distress.

SUNDERLAND RURAL DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 17,552. Rateable Value (1892-93), £86,311.

Letter from *S. S. Hodgson*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district. During the late severe weather a limited number of men were unable to follow their employment, but as a considerable proportion of the population are engaged in mining operations the pressure was not extensively felt.

2. No necessity has arisen to take steps for the relief of distress in the district. Matters throughout the entire area are in their normal condition.

TARVIN RURAL DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 12,387. Rateable Value (1892-93), £103,121.

Letter from *R. O. Orton*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. IN this entirely rural district of the Tarvin Union there is no exceptional distress, except such as is caused by the severe weather. Agricultural operations, such as early potato planting, &c., are, of course, quite at a standstill owing to the protracted frost, and a considerable number of labourers are out of employment in consequence. In each village, also, a few men, such as brickmakers, bricklayers, &c., are idle, but the breaking up of the frost will at once give employment to all.

2. To relieve the distress, soup kitchens have been opened in two or three of the villages, supported by voluntary effort, and private charity has done much through the district to alleviate the distress.

3. We have no register of the unemployed.

4. I have no suggestions to make for this district, as the distress is only temporary. It is difficult to estimate the number relieved by soup kitchen, &c., many not amongst the unemployed, or in absolute distress, being partakers of the various charities.

TENTERDEN RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 6,537. Rateable Value (1892-93), £39,617.

Letter from *B. Tylden-Pattenson*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is distress in this district, but it is not exceptional, and it is owing chiefly to agricultural depression and the severe weather.

2. In all parishes there are voluntary agencies to meet the distress.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. The Council have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving such distress.

THAME RURAL DISTRICT (OXFORD AND BUCKINGHAM).

Population (1891), 8,452. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *W. Parker*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

YOUR Circular Letter will be laid before the Council at their next meeting. The Chairman, however, desires me to state that, in his opinion, there is not any exceptional distress in this district, the wants of the poor being looked after by local charities, which are numerous in the district, and that there has been no considerable increase in applicants for either out-door or in-door relief.

THETFORD UNION { THETFORD / BRANDON } RURAL DISTRICTS { (NORFOLK). / (WEST SUFFOLK). }

Population (1891) { Thetford, 7,025 / Brandon, 5,981 } Rateable Value (1892-93), £81,551.

Letter from *E. N. Cole*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

THIS Union embraces the two Rural District Councils of Thetford and Brandon. With respect to the parishes in the Thetford Rural District, the Relieving Officer reports that he has met with no exceptional cases of distress, nor has he had any applications for relief from any unemployed; and with respect to the parishes in the Brandon Rural District, the Relieving Officer reports that he has had only about three or four applications for relief in consequence of unemployment, and that these applications were from young and lazy fellows, who never cared about work at all. These replies will embrace the whole of the rural portion of the Thetford Union.

THINGOE RURAL DISTRICT (WEST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 15,743. Rateable Value (1892-93), £10,753.

Letter from *R. Burrell*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

IN answer to your circular, I send you a list * of men and boys out of work in Thingoe Union as nearly as I can. The list was made out to-day from the District Councillors and the Relieving Officers, and I believe it to be nearly correct.

I expect many of the men will be employed as soon as the frost goes and the farmers can get to work on the land, which, I hope, will be in about a week from this time. I am sorry to say that I think a certain number will be out of work, say till the middle of April; in fact, many of the farmers are so badly off that they are obliged to reduce expenditure in any way they can. I myself have been what we call making work to keep my men employed, and have been doing work which was only done because I make a point of not allowing my men to be out of work.

2. I enclose you a circular which has been sent out to all the Road Surveyors in the district, and has been acted upon in some places; but in some parishes, as in the parish of Risby, a few men went to work, and found the ground frozen in so deep that they could not raise stones, and had to give it up.

Question No. 3 I do not consider applicable to this district.

4. I consider the only way to keep the men on the land is to raise the price of agricultural productions; and if the present low prices of produce continue, much land in this Union will go out of cultivation. A large number of farmers have given notice to leave their farms next Michaelmas.

In conclusion, I may say that many of the clergy have done a great deal in some parishes, and much more would have been given if persons could have afforded it.

[* The list specifies the parishes, and gives the number in each who are out of work—the total being 285].

(Circular above referred to).

Thingoe Union, 9th February, 1895.

Sir,—I am directed by this board to call your attention to the number of labouring men now out of employment, and to suggest you should put them on for stone-raising and breaking in your parish, without delay, if practicable.—Yours, &c., *James J. Sparke*, Clerk.

THIRSK RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 12,847. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. I'Anson*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

THORNE RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 6,754. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *G. Maud*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THE exceptional distress in the district, which now exists to a considerable extent, is not due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, but to the severe weather.

2. In order to meet the distress the Highway Authority has employed a number of men to procure stone or gravel, and to break dross for the use of the roads. A local distress fund has been opened, and bread, soup, and coal have been and are being distributed to the unemployed and their families. By these and other voluntary agencies, the distress is being relieved in a fairly satisfactory manner.

3. The Relief Committee have carefully looked into deserving cases, but no unemployed register has been maintained.

4. Being of opinion that the steps adopted will prove sufficient to meet the distress, I have no suggestions to make.

TUTBURY RURAL DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 9,035. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *S. Higgott*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

FROM inquiries I have made, there does not appear to be any exceptional distress in the district of this Council, and the Council has not therefore deemed it necessary to take any steps in the matter. In the parish of Tutbury, which is the largest parish in this Rural District, containing a population of 2,053, I understand there are between 40 and 50 men out of employment, but a relief committee has been formed, and it is thought that this committee will be able to deal with the distress by voluntary contributions, as the distress in this parish is looked upon as temporary only. In the other parishes in the district, most of the labourers are employed in agricultural pursuits, and there does not appear to be any distress of an exceptional nature amongst them.

WANTAGE RURAL DISTRICT (BERKS).

Population (1891), 12,880. Rateable Value (1892-93), £93,027.

Letter from *J. Lousley*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is very little exceptional distress, and what there is, is due to the low price of agricultural produce and the severe weather.

2. The Wantage Rural District Council have had only about half-a-dozen applications for work, and employment has been found for them.

3. There is no unemployed register kept, as none is needed.

4. We find when we offer work, some do not appear again, and this shows that a great many who call themselves unemployed will not work if they can get it.

WARMINSTER RURAL DISTRICT (WILTS).

Population (1891), 7,470. Rateable Value (1892-93), £46,872.

Letter from *T. Ponting*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE has been no such exceptional distress in this district as is evidently contemplated by your letter. A few masons and labourers have necessarily been unable to work during the severe and prolonged frost lately experienced.

2. A local committee has distributed a quantity of coal amongst the poor, but beyond this I am not aware that anything has been done by the Local Authority in the way of relieving distress, as it has not been found necessary.

3. No register of the unemployed is kept.

4. The weather at the present time is much less severe, and we are hoping for a speedy break-up of the frost when there will be ample work. I understand that only three unemployed men have applied to the Warminster Guardians for relief; two were relieved, and the other was given work by the Urban District Council.

WEARDALE RURAL DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 9,859. Rateable Value (1892-93), £68,236.

Letter from *J. W. Roddam*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE has been some want of employment caused by the severe weather, but not sufficient to cause any pressing exceptional distress.

2. Such distress as there has been, has been to some extent relieved by public subscription, as well as a contributio from a miner's fund.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

WEST WARD RURAL DISTRICT (WESTMORLAND).

Population (1891), 7,709. Rateable Value (1892-93), £79,725.

Letter from *T. Geldart*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. WE have little, if any, exceptional distress in this district, due to the severe weather.

2. Any distress that may have arisen has been met by voluntary agency. No applications for relief owing to the severe weather have been made to the Board of Guardians.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

WILLITON RURAL DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 15,470. Rateable Value (1892-93), £102,860.

Letter from *R. J. Gimblett*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. No cases of exceptional distress in this district have been brought before the District Council.

2. I am not aware of any voluntary agencies having been formed to meet distress, nor has anything been done by public authorities.

3. No register maintained.

4. No observations to make.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

Stoke Newington Parish.

Population (1891), 30,936. Rateable Value (1892-93), £193,976.

Letter from *G. Webb*, Vestry Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress exists in this parish except that due to severe weather.

2. Soup kitchens are in active operation, and the expenditure incurred in the removal of snow has, to a slight extent, met the necessities of the case.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

II.—COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Bristol County Borough.

Population (1891), 221,578. Rateable Value (1892-93), £1,042,974.

Letter from *R. H. Symes*, Mayor, 23rd February 1895.

1. In certain parts of the city there is exceptional distress, to a great extent due to the closing of iron-rolling nd galvanizing works, which took place many weeks before the severe weather set in, and in most poor parts of t he city there is exceptional distress, due to the stoppage of out-door work by the severe weather.

2. The Corporation, as the Sanitary Authority, have employed a large number of men who were out of work, and numerous voluntary agencies have endeavoured to meet the distress by feeding the children and old people, and within the last fortnight a Mayor's Relief Fund has been raised by voluntary contributions, already amounting to upwards of 4,000*l.*, which has been distributed by the Mayor through local commiteees formed in the various parishes of the city, of ministers of religion, and others having the local knowledge necessary to enable them to relieve the most urgent cases of distress.

3. The Guardians of the Poor supply the Sanitary Authority with lists of those men applying for relief who are able and willing to undertake such work as the Authority can give, but there is not any general unemployed register maintained.

4. I am not able to suggest any other modes of relieving the distress.

Canterbury County Borough.

Population (1891), 23,062. Rateable Value (1892-93), £99,225.

Letter from *G. Collard*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

I do not think this city is suffering from any exceptional distress owing to the late severe weather, and looking to the numerous and well-managed charitable institutions in the city, it has not been deemed necessary to take further steps.

Coventry County Borough.

Population (1891), 52,724. Rateable Value (1892-93), £157,186.

Letter from *J. B. Loudon*, Mayor, 23rd February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in the district. (i.) *Distress due to local circumstances.*—Apart from the severe weather, the distress is worst in the watch trade, and is mainly due to the displacement of the cheaper kinds of hand-made watches by machine-made goods, the cessation of the American demand for certain parts of watches, and the stoppage of Australian orders. The distress is also severe in the ribbon-weaving trade, which is much depressed everywhere at present. Some of the men engaged in these trades try to get employment at the cycle works, which are fully employed, and men also come in from neighbouring towns with the same object, the consequence being that the cycle trade is overstocked with hands, and distress exists there also, though it is much less acute. (ii.) *Distress due to the severe weather.*—The only trade in which exceptional distress exists which is directly due to the severe weather is the building trade, which has been at a standstill for four weeks. The cold also increases the sufferings of those who are out of work in the other trades mentioned, though it does not directly affect those trades.

2. (*i.*) *As*

2. (i.) *As to the Action of Public Authorities.*—A conference was held on the 14th instant between a deputation from the Board of Guardians and the General Purposes Committee of the City Council, at which the Local Government Board's Circular* of the 11th instant was considered. But the frost made it impossible to start any out-door work at that time, and the conference was without result. A contract has recently been let by the Council for the making of a number of streets under the Private Street Works Act, 1892, the work under which will be done as soon as the state of the ground allows. (ii.) *As to the Action of Voluntary Agencies.*—There are in the city four "philanthropic societies" maintained by public subscription, which investigate and relieve cases of distress recommended to them. These societies have during the frost supplemented the pecuniary relief given by them with gifts of food and coal. Four soup kitchens have been opened as an emergency measure during the frost, and the committee managing the largest of these give coal tickets also. (iii.) *As to the Number of Cases relieved.*—I have been unable to obtain reliable information on this point.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. When the effects of the frost have disappeared the soup kitchens will be closed, and I anticipate that the philanthropic societies will then be able to deal with the distress remaining. The task is lighter than might be inferred from my former statements, owing to the independence of the people engaged in the watch and ribbon trades, and their great reluctance to accept help. From another point of view this admirable spirit creates a difficulty, inasmuch as public efforts made at such a time as the present to reach the most deserving cases of distress are too apt to fail in their object, and to be intercepted by those who trade on charity.

Huddersfield County Borough.

Population (1891), 95,420. Rateable Value (1892-93), £429,145.

Letter from *H. Barber*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. Exceptional distress is at present prevailing in the borough, but although the trade of the district has for some time been at a low ebb, it is the general opinion that the present distress is due more to the severe weather, which has been experienced for some weeks past, than to the circumstances connected with the industries of the borough.

2. A local distress relief fund has been opened by the Mayor, towards which upwards of 1,000*l.* have been subscribed, and during the week ended Saturday, 16th February 1895, 203 families were relieved, and about 3,500 free meals were given daily. The local organisation society also relieved 130 persons during the same week.

3. An unemployed register was opened at the beginning of last year, and although a large number of the unemployed were registered the register seems to have been unnecessary, and has been discontinued.

4. The Mayor has no suggestions to make with regard to the relief of the distress, beyond stating that the steps which have already been taken within the borough appear to fully meet the temporary distress which has arisen, and which, as before stated, has been caused chiefly by the severe weather.

Norwich County Borough.

Population (1891), 100,970. Rateable Value (1892-93), £321,154.

Letter from *C. E. Bignold*, Mayor, 23rd February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in the City of Norwich, and it is mainly due to the extreme severity of the weather. I am not aware of any peculiar local causes.

2, 3, and 4. The distress is being met by charitable subscriptions, worked by voluntary agencies, soup kitchens and other forms of charity. The city committees and one private person have taken on a certain limited number of the unemployed, and the leaders of the two political parties have agreed that the existing law as to the disfranchisement of those receiving out-door relief from the guardians shall not be put in force during periods like the present of exceptional hardship from causes beyond personal control. It is needless to remark that there are always some persons in need through improvidence and slackness of trade.

For the purposes of relief, the district visiting society, which is the channel for the distribution of the special funds, has divided the city into 16 districts; each with a committee, which has been requested to make a register of the unemployed. It will not be lost sight of that the cause of the present distress, *i.e.*, the severity of the season, is itself a preventative of the employment of labour, even if it be thought wise to throw the burden on the ratepayers, though under exceptional conditions something might be done. The Select Committee will probably consider that the mode for the distribution of relief is an effective one, and less likely to be abused than indiscriminate charity. Approximate number daily relieved by the district visiting society, apart from other agencies, 1,000 per day. Register of unemployed unreliable.

The change in the weather is probably much mitigating the situation.

Nottingham County Borough.

Population (1891), 213,877. Rateable Value (1892-93), £881,161.

Letter from *J. Bright*, Mayor, 23rd February 1895.

1. (*a*) There is exceptional distress in the district of this borough, due to the severe weather. (*b*) There is also some distress caused by the influx of a large number of persons who are seeking employment on the works of the new line of the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company in this town. (*c*) There is also the normal distress caused by the continued depression in the staple industries of the town, and by the general depression in trade. 2. (*a*) The

* *See* note * on page 87.

2. (*a*) The distress arising from the severe weather has been met by public subscription. These subscriptions have been dispensed by means of the police, the School Board, trade organisations, charity organisations, church and chapel societies, and other existing institutions. It is impossible to say how many people have been thus relieved. (*b*) The distress arising from the presence of persons seeking for employment on the new railway is only temporary. (*c*) Those who are normally out of employment in the staple trades of the town are relieved to a very large extent out of the funds of their trades unions, but there remains a considerable number of persons unemployed through the badness of trade and other causes, who would be willing to work if suitable employment could be found.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. (*a*) I suggest that private benevolence may be relied upon at all times to meet distress through severe weather. (*b*) I need not further refer to the distress from the influx of persons seeking railway employment, as it is transitory. (*c*) I suggest with regard to the normal unemployed that the Town Councils should have powers conferred on them to deal with such cases as may appear to them to be purely local in character, and to require only temporary assistance, and where it is not desirable that such temporary assistance should be rendered by the Boards of Guardians. The larger question of finding work for the unemployed is, in my opinion, a national question to be dealt with by the Government.

OLDHAM COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 131,463. Rateable Value (1892–93), £394,903.

Letter from *A. Nicholson*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. PRACTICALLY the only exceptional distress in the County Borough of Oldham is due entirely to the severe weather, which has prevented outside workers following their employment.

2. The highways committee have employed a great number of men in clearing snow away from the streets, but many of their own *employés* who work outside have been prevented working during the severe frost. The Corporation have in hand (in addition to the sewering, paving, and flagging of many streets) . . . . . a large sewerage works, partly constructed, and all outside workers on this have had to cease work.

3. There is no unemployed register kept in Oldham. The great bulk of the population in Oldham are engaged in the mills, engineering and other works, and are not affected by the weather.

4. A great amount of relief is given daily in several parts of the town to the unemployed, such relief consisting of soup, bread, coals, &c., and the relief fund has been liberally subscribed to. The relief referred to is disposed of by the police. In addition to this, relief is given from private sources in several other places.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

ALDEBURGH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (EAST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 2,159. Rateable Value (1892-93), £7,858.

Letter from *J. G. S. Anderson*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is some exceptional distress in the building trades; while the poverty which is always felt among some of the fishermen at this time of the year has been to some extent accentuated by the severe frost.

2. A committee formed on Saturday, 16th February, made a complete list of all the men employed in the building trade, whose wages for the last 10 months had averaged less than 1*l.* per week, and who were out of work owing to the frost. This list, supplied by all the employers in the building trade in this place (Aldeburgh), only amounted to 12 men. Nine families were immediately assisted with a week's pay at the rate of 4*d.* for an adult, and 2*d.* for each child per diem. Since then (16th February) nine other families, mostly fishermen, who occasionally work as labourers in the building trade, have been assisted in the same way. During the frost the Guardians increased the out-door relief to those already in receipt of it.

3. No; in so small a place there is no necessity for an unemployed register.

4. No suggestions to make.

BATLEY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 28,719. Rateable Value (1892-93), £90,050.

Letter from *J. Wilson*, Mayor, 23rd February 1895.

DURING the severe weather of the past month or six weeks there has been exceptional distress in this borough and district. Such distress has, however, been confined, for the most part, to those belonging to the class known as "out-door workers," whose employment has been stopped by reason of the continued frost. I have spoken to the executive officer of the Batley Charity Organisation Society, and I gather from him that there has really been no distress in the borough attributable to circumstances peculiar to the locality.

Numerous agencies have been at work to supply the wants of the distressed, during the period I have named, in addition to the ordinary, every-day work of our Charity Organisation Society. At my instance a committee was formed in connection with that society, by whom a special central relief fund has been raised by voluntary subscriptions, and by means of this fund a daily average of 240 families were relieved by a distribution of bread and

and other provisions, during the week ended Saturday, the 16th February. In addition to this, other voluntary agencies have been at work. I am informed that during the week above mentioned the Batley Licensed Victuallers distributed flour and groceries to the needy unemployed. The Independent Labour Party have, I understand, also done something in the way of relief; and soup kitchens have been opened in various parts of the borough, and free breakfasts have been given by charitably-disposed inhabitants. I am assured by those who have been mostly interested in this relief work that the exceptional distress has been amply met by these various agencies and that, so far as can be ascertained, there are no cases which have been unprovided for. Now that the frost has disappeared it is hoped that the out-door workers will soon be able to resume their accustomed employment, and that then there will be no need for further special relief.

In reply to your inquiry as to whether an unemployed register has been maintained, it has not, I believe, been found necessary to do anything in that direction.

The work of the Charity Organization Society is continued the year round, and ordinary cases of destitution are dealt with by that society.

Bideford Municipal Borough (Devon).

Population (1891), 7,831. Rateable Value (1892–93), £17,830.

Letter from *C. W. Hole*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. The Mayor does not consider there is any exceptional distress in the district.

2. The Urban District Council has employed a large number of able-bodied men during the present and last week in the construction of footpaths. Subscriptions have been received, and the proceeds applied in the establishment of a daily soup kitchen, the distribution of coal, bread, and money.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained in this borough.

4. The Mayor considers money should be provided out of the Imperial Exchequer for this purpose, and on easy terms, to the Town Council.

Blackpool Municipal Borough (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 23,846. Rateable Value (1892–93), £178,377.

Letter from *T. Loftos*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in this borough, only so far as may be attributed to the severity of the weather, which has been exceptional.

2. Through the agency of the Chief Constable a soup kitchen and other means of relief have been provided to meet the distress. The average daily number relieved by this police agency during the week ended Saturday the 16th February was 1,700. There are also other voluntary agencies in the town, but the Mayor is unable to give the number relieved by the latter. These special forms of relief will cease soon after the severe weather, which is changing, comes to an end.

3. There is not any unemployed register maintained in Blackpool.

4. Replying to the Board's inquiry, the Mayor of Blackpool very respectfully suggests that the Guardians of the Poor are the proper authority to meet distress and give relief, and that the Local Government Board might issue an order authorising Guardians to meet exceptional distress, and grant special relief when required.

Bournemouth Municipal Borough (Southampton).

Population (1891), 37,781. Rateable Value (1892–93), £278,036.

Letter from *J. Druitt, jun.*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. There is very considerable exceptional distress prevailing among the artizan and working classes in the Borough of Bournemouth and the neighbouring districts, the population of which is dependent upon Bournemouth for work. This arises immediately from the severity of the weather, which has put an end to all building and other out-door operations. There is no manufacturing industry carried on in the neighbourhood, but such as are connected with the building trade; and during the present winter we have had an exceptional continuance of hard frosts, which has materially interfered with the building in the district. This exceptional distress is aggravated by the fact that during the past year there has been considerable want of employment owing to the depression throughout the country generally, which has made itself felt in this district by the cessation of the demand for houses, the number of houses built being at the present time in excess of the demand for them, consequently building operations have been very slack and many employers have been working only short time.

2. Little has been done to meet the distress by the Council of Bournemouth, owing to the fact (*a*) that the cause of distress puts it to a very great extent out of their power to provide suitable work. (*b*) The Council hoped to have been in a position to have employed a considerable amount of unskilled labour during the winter in the laying out of a new cemetery, but are unable to proceed with this until they have received the sanction of the Local Government Board to borrow the necessary funds. This sanction was applied for on 19th September 1894, and a local inquiry held on 19th November, and they are daily hoping to receive it, and upon its receipt will at once take steps, as soon as the weather permits, to commence the works. A public relief committee has been formed which seeks voluntary contributions, and for the past two weeks has been expending upwards of 500*l.* per week in relieving the urgent necessities of those who are out of work from no fault of their own. The district served by this Committee embraces the whole of the industrial population connected with Bournemouth, including a very populous area situate in the adjoining county of Dorset.

3. No unemployed register is maintained, but the Council have at this moment under their consideration the desirability of constituting a Labour Bureau, part of the duties of which will be to keep a register of unemployed workmen seeking situations and of employers seeking workmen.

4. So far as this Council is concerned, the only suggestion they can offer is the hope that the Local Government Board will grant them the sanctions for which they have applied, as they will be then in a position to provide a certain amount of work, and that the sanction of the Local Government Board should be given, under the Local Authorities (Expenses) Act, to the Council contributing towards the expenses of the proposed Labour Bureau if it should be decided to form one. The Council themselves employ on their ordinary staff upwards of 250 men, at wages amounting in the aggregate to 280*l.* a week.

BRECON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (BRECKNOCK).

Population (1891), 5,794. Rateable Value (1892–93), £22,121.

Letter from *G. H. Williams*, Town Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the Borough of Brecon, resulting from the severe weather.

2. A special appeal has been made by the Mayor for public subscriptions in aid of the exceptional distress. The result of the appeal has been that the Corporation has distributed 30*l.* during the last two months as donations to soup kitchens, and they have also distributed 3,600 one shilling relief tickets available only for coal, bread, groceries, or meat. Total disbursements, 210*l.*

3. No register of unemployed has been kept.

4. Have no suggestions to make, as the distress has been relieved by the public subscriptions referred to in Answer No. 2.

BRIGHOUSE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 20,666. Rateable Value (1893–94), £65,140.

Letter from *W. Smith*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is certainly exceptional distress in this district, but it is entirely caused by the severe weather stopping all out-door labour; the mills (silk, cotton and woollen), and other inside industries, are practically running full time, and it is only amongst the out-door workpeople where the distress is caused.

2. The Corporation have done nothing to meet the distress save by finding employment for the removal of snow, and when frost set in this also was stopped; now that the thaw has set in work is being found by the Corporation in the removal of sludge and road cleaning. The distress has been very well met by voluntary agencies. The Vicar of Brighouse has provided food, clothes and coal, something like 15*l.* per week having been distributed in these, to investigated cases, besides 100 free dinners per day to school children. In the Rastrick portion of the borough 110 free meals per day have also been provided by the Vicar of Rastrick. The Nonconformist Association has also provided free breakfasts for the whole of the borough, an average of 271 per day having been provided for last week. Many of the gentry and others have given soup, bread, clothing, &c., from their residences.

3. An unemployed register has been opened at this office, but I cannot say that it has proved a success; many have availed themselves of it and work found for them, and some few have been entered thereon at their request, and when sent for to work have refused, notwithstanding the fact that no distinction is made in the pay they receive from that of the regular staff employed by the Corporation.

BURSLEM MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 31,999. Rateable Value (1892–93), £103,462.

Letter from *S. Lawton*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is very little exceptional distress in this town beyond that caused by the severity of the weather. Trade has been very depressed, but is improving.

2. The public authorities have not taken any measures to relieve distress except that a few extra labourers have been employed in clearing snow from the streets. The Guardians have granted the usual relief. There is a Local Charity Organization Society which meets every week and distributes food and fuel. The number of cases relieved last week was 74. Soup kitchens have been established by voluntary effort, and a great number of persons have been supplied with soup and bread.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. I have no suggestions to make, and I consider our Local Charity Organization Society is quite capable of dealing with the existing distress.

CLITHEROE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 10,815. Rateable Value (1892–93), £38,861.

Letter from *T. Garnett*, Mayor, 23rd February 1895.

THERE is exceptional distress in this borough, caused in part by the severe weather, in part by the depression in trade. Clitheroe is a town of about 11,000 inhabitants, and is the centre of a large agricultural district. The land being wholly under grass, the farms being small, and worked almost entirely by the tenants and their families, there

there is not distress through want of employment in agriculture, except among the few labourers who are employed in draining on the various estates, but are not permanently attached to any one farm. The largest industries are cotton manufacturing, and limestone quarrying and burning. In the former there is a considerable quantity of machinery now idle, and my inquiries lead me to the conclusion that there are 360 persons out of work. Of the classes affected by the severity of the weather the following are unemployed: quarrymen, 40; masons and masons' labourers, 102; slaters and plasterers, 26; a total of 528. There is also distress caused by the fact that many who are in work are not fully employed. The distress is being met by voluntary agencies, the Good Samaritan Society, the St. James' Soup Kitchen, the Mayor's Relief Fund, all of which distribute food, clothing, and orders on tradesmen for supplies. I estimate the number of families thus assisted during the week ended 16th February at 200.

In my opinion public authorities have ample powers to deal with exceptional distress, but they might, with great advantage, make a much fuller use of them than they at present do.

CREWE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 32,783. Rateable Value (1892-93), £110,306.

Letter from *F. Cooke*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is some considerable distress in the locality which is due to the severe weather, and principally affects those engaged in the building and out-door work departments.

2. The distress has been relieved by voluntary agencies. The Corporation could have found employment for about 100 men if a sanction for a loan of 7,000*l.*, in respect of which an inquiry was held in September last, had been forwarded to them weeks ago. Employment was found for about 50 men for about a fortnight before the severe frost began.

3. A register of the unemployed is not maintained, but a Relief Committee, of which the Mayor is treasurer, has been relieving about 1,500 persons a week for the last month.

DONCASTER MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 25,933. Rateable Value (1892-93), £124,103.

Letter from *T. B. Sugden*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE has been during the recent severe weather a certain amount of distress in excess of the normal condition of things in this borough at this season of the year, principally amongst two industries, viz.:—(*a*) The building trade; (*b*) Labour engaged on the Canal. With these exceptions the weather has not interfered to any very considerable extent with the principal employment of artizans in this borough, viz., in the various branches of the railway industries. At the same time there is a certain percentage of the population who, poor at all times, have experienced special hardships during this exceptionally severe weather.

2. The following steps have been taken to meet these special circumstances:—(*a*) During the continued fall of snow about 192 men, over and above the ordinary staff of the Corporation, were employed during three weeks ended respectively January 17th, 31st, and February 7th, in cleaning the streets at a cost of 139*l.* 9*s.* 9*d.* (*b*) Since the failure of that work, the Corporation have been employing additional hands in labour and carting material for the formation of a new and important road in the borough. Wages were paid for this additional labour alone for the week ended the 16th instant, 114*l.* 8*s.* For the week ended 21st instant, about 109*l.*, and 40*l.* for labour delivering water from house to house where the supply was frozen. (*c*) The Corporation have started the distribution of relief in the way of soup and bread and coals and free breakfasts for young children before school hours in the morning. The following are the numbers so relieved:—With soup and bread for week ended February 15th: children, 640 per diem; parents, 261 per diem. Free breakfasts have been given during five days to an average of 353 children per diem. Fifty tons of coal have been distributed by the relief fund. In addition to the above a considerable amount of relief has been distributed by private effort, including food and nearly 50 tons of coal. It is believed that ample means will be forthcoming to continue this relief during the continuance of the storm.

3. No unemployed register has been established.

4. It is difficult to suggest means for the purpose of relieving distress arising from exceptional weather. Relief work is doubtless preferable on all accounts to a system which savours of doles or charity, but it is just the class of work which can most readily be used for relief purposes, as not requiring a special training, which as a rule is affected and rendered practically impossible by the weather. My Corporation consider that they are fortunately situated in being able to find employment as mentioned in Clause 1 (b), and intend next week to find further employment for labour on the construction of about two miles of sewers. In conclusion, my Corporation instruct me to say that in the event of the distress continuing they will avail themselves of every means in their power to ameliorate the condition of those who are suffering.

GODALMING MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SURREY).

Population (1891), 8,117. Rateable Value (1892-93), £30,858.

Letter from *T. P. Whately*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress within the Borough of Godalming, but it is owing to there being about 250 men living in the borough who are out of employment owing to the severe weather. These men are not inhabitants of the borough, but have been imported by the contractor who is engaged in carrying out the sewerage works of the borough. The distress of the actual inhabitants of the borough is not exceptional.

2. There are two voluntary agencies for the relief of the distress in this borough: (*a*) a Soup Kitchen; (*b*) a Borough Relief Fund. Both of these are supported by voluntary contributions. The soup kitchen is open about twice a week, and soup is supplied for a very small payment, and about 250 families are helped each time it is open. The Borough Relief Fund is administered by a committee, and distributes tickets to deserving cases, which tickets are, in fact, orders upon traders in the town to supply goods of a certain value. The average daily number relieved by the latter agency during the week ended Saturday, 16th February, was 65.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. No other better method than those in force in this borough can be suggested for the purpose of relieving the distress.

HASLINGDEN MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 18,225. Rateable Value (1892–93), £68,491.

Letter from *W. Musgrove*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. A CERTAIN amount of distress does at present exist in this borough amongst the out-door workers, which is caused by the protracted frost.

2. The Town Council have found work for the unemployed who are temporarily out of work through the severe weather. The work, which is divided into shifts, consists of snow-cutting and clearing, and the breaking of cob stone for macadamising the roads. All who have made application have had work found. The average daily number of such extra men employed during the week ended Saturday, the 16th February last, was 25.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. See reply to Query No. 2.

KIDWELLY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CARMARTHEN).

Population (1891), 2,732. Rateable Value (1892–93), £8,428.

Letter from *H. Stead*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is very serious distress in Kidwelly, as the tin works, the principal industry, are closed, and by the severe weather out-door work is impracticable.

2. We have relieved for two weeks about 350 cases each week, but our funds are nearly exhausted.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. Nothing except voluntary aid and the individual appeal to the Board of Guardians.

LISKEARD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 3,984. Rateable Value (1892–93), £18,460.

Letter from *H. L. Caunter*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the borough, although many able-bodied men are out of employment owing to the severe weather.

2. Voluntary agencies have been distributing coal, bread, and soup, and about 200 families were relieved during the week ended 16th February.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

LOUGHBOROUGH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (LEICESTER).

Population (1891), 18,196. Rateable Value (1892–93), £71,503.

Letter from *J. E. Jarratt*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is little exceptional distress in the borough, other than that due to the severe weather.

2. A public subscription was invited by the Mayor, and a distress relief committee formed. A central committee was appointed to distribute money and food. Free breakfasts have been given to poor children, and large quantities of soup have been distributed each day in various localities in the borough. Other voluntary agencies have been at work, and there has been no lack of funds. Much consideration and kindness have been shown by those in better circumstances. The central relief committee alone expended during the week ended Saturday, 16th February, 140*l.*, and a larger amount during the present week. Five thousand three hundred and fifty free breakfasts were provided by the central committee in ten days; 1,500 applications were dealt with by the central committee, but many were relieved twice or more. The number of persons who received doles may be put at 1,000. This represents the work of the central committee alone. Other voluntary agencies were also very active.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. The Mayor has no suggestions to make.

MALDON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 5,397. Rateable Value (1892-93), £17,826.

Letter from *J. C. Freeman*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress, partly due to the condition of agriculture in the neighbourhood and partly to the very severe weather.

2. Soup kitchen in the Parish of St. Mary, Maldon, and private charity. On Saturday, the 16th, a general meeting of the inhabitants of the town was held, when it was arranged that relief should be given to the distressed. This was provided for by a general collection, made by special collectors, and the relief was distributed by visitors. The town was divided into districts, and every house where there was a probability of distress existing was visited. The distribution was made on Monday, the 18th February, and was as follows :—

Number of houses where relief was given	271
Value of grocery goods distributed	£17 1 5
Value of loaves (331 in number)	£5 10 4
Soup distributed, 638½ pints, cost (not including labour to same, gratuitous)	£3 17 5

This relief will be continued for two weeks. About 70 tons of coals have also been distributed in four weekly distributions, extending over the past four weeks, at a cost of about 75*l*. The Maldon Urban Sanitary Authority is ready to provide work for a number of unemployed, but are and have been waiting for the order of the Local Government Board authorising them to borrow money, part of which would be expended in finding work. The inquiry before the Local Government Board inspector, as to borrowing this money, was held on 8th November 1894. On 28th December 1894 a letter was written by the Clerk of the authority asking for the order. On the 28th January 1895 the clerk again wrote to the Local Government Board, urging them to let the authority have the order on the ground that they could employ men who were out of work during the winter and spring months, and informing the Board that the authority had already made (subject to the order of the Board being obtained) arrangements for borrowing the money ; and again, on the 13th February 1895, after having received the Circular* of the Local Government Board suggesting that the local authorities should find work for the unemployed, the clerk to the authority wrote to the Local Government Board, urging them to send the necessary order for borrowing the money applied for, but up to the present time practically no reply has been sent by the Local Government Board.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. Yes ; this can be done, if the Urban Authority have the order they ask for.

NEATH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (GLAMORGAN).

Population (1891), 11,113. Rateable Value (1892-93), £32,097.

Letter from *E. C. Curtis*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. WHILST there is a great amount of poverty at Neath owing to the long-continued severity of the weather and to the temporary stoppage of certain tin-plate and other works, it cannot be said that there is any exceptional distress in the district.

2. The Corporation, through their Streets Committee, have given employment in dressing stones to masons unable (owing to the weather) to follow their ordinary avocation, and the Borough Surveyor has been empowered to engage additional men to remove accumulations of snow from the sides of roads, &c. Two or three soup kitchens were opened by private individuals some weeks ago ; but when the frost was found to be of so long duration the Mayor deemed it advisable to open a public soup kitchen at the Municipal Buildings on a more extensive scale. This has been at work since Saturday, 9th February, the management being conducted by ladies of the town, with the Mayor as Chairman of the Committee, and the expenses being defrayed by voluntary subscriptions. The average daily number thus relieved during the week ended Saturday, 16th February, is 500. Coal has also been from time to time distributed on a liberal scale amongst poor widows and men out of employ in the town, the cost of this being also provided from voluntary agencies. The number of persons receiving coal is about 750.

3. No official register of unemployed is kept, but the Mayor has, with the assistance of the borough police, the Relieving Officer, and others, caused a fairly reliable list of persons needing relief to be prepared.

4. The Mayor has no suggestions to make to the Select Committee. He is convinced that everything that can be done by the Corporation, with their existing and rather limited powers, and by private enterprise, to mitigate the sufferings of the needy, is being done.

NEWPORT MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (ISLE OF WIGHT).

Population (1891), 10,216. Rateable Value (1892-93), £35,503.

Letter from *H. R. Hooper*, Town Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress here, caused by the weather chiefly.

2. Voluntary agencies have done their best to meet distress, nearly 200 persons being supplied daily with food, and in addition to this, the Mayor controls a benevolent society, who give aid where required.

3. An unemployed register was opened some time since, but the men here for the past year all had work, and except through the weather would not have been out of employ, if they chose to work.

4. Can make no suggestion ; everything is done here to give employ and help that it is possible to do. A P. S. A. Society keep a labour register.

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* See note * on page 87.

ROCHESTER MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (KENT).

Population (1891), 26,290. Rateable Value (1892–93), £97,295.

Letter from *R. Prall*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE has been exceptional distress in the city, occasioned by the severe weather; in consequence of the river being frozen all the large river-working population have been thrown out of employment, and owing to the inability to unload coal all the cement works and some other large factories have been obliged to cease working.

2. The Mayor has organised a relief fund, some 700*l.* having been subscribed, and this is being expended in distributing coal, bread and groceries to those who are in need; besides this, there have been large distributions by private individuals. For the week ended 16th February the average daily number relieved would appear to be as under:—

In the Strood District, where the greatest distress prevails	600	In St. Margaret's District	60
In St. Peter's District	100	In Borstal District	40
		In St. Nicholas' District	20
			820

In addition to this, the Corporation have during the whole time the frost has lasted employed an average of 100 men per day in removing the snow and clearing the streets.

3. An unemployed register has not been kept.

4. With reference to this head of inquiry the Corporation believe that there are most important works which might well now be undertaken in the interests of the country in this locality; for instance—(1) Fortifications. Forts have already been erected on the Rochester side for the protection of Her Majesty's Dockyard at Chatham, and it is important that they should be erected on the side between the Thames and Medway, to protect the dockyard on the north side. (2) The present Higham Canal might be continued from Higham to Whitewall Creek, opposite Her Majesty's Dockyard, Chatham, through the valley, so as to be made available for the use of Her Majesty's gunboats, torpedo boats, and for other purposes, between the Thames and Medway. (3) The present North Kent (South Eastern Railway), and London, Chatham, and Dover Railway, should be connected with the Chattenden Magazines and Upnor and Hoo Forts; by this means a war vessel at Portsmouth could receive her ammunition in a few hours. (4) The erection and completion of the repairing and machinery shops for Chatham Dockyard extension is, as the Corporation believe, contemplated by Her Majesty's Government; a portion of these works might well be undertaken forthwith. These are heads of most important works which the Corporation venture most respectfully to bring under the attention of the Local Government Board, in order that they may if they see fit communicate with the other Departments of Her Majesty's Government on the subject of their being commenced. I have, of course, not gone into details in this letter, but I am instructed to say that should the Board desire it, a deputation of the Corporation would wait upon them at any time, to go carefully into each head with them and explain fully the grounds upon which this letter is written.

The Corporation hope that the Board will not think that they are travelling out of their province in making these suggestions, but having regard to the importance of Chatham Dockyard, and also to the fact that suggestions are invited, they have thought it their duty, most respectfully, to bring the matters before the Department.

ST. IVES MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 6,094. Rateable Value (1892–93), £14,945.

Letter from *E. Boase*, Town Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, due chiefly to the failure of the fisheries.

2. My Council are employing as many men as possible to repair the damage caused by the recent flood here, and up to the 16th instant over 400*l.* was spent in labour alone in connection with such repairs. Also, a local subscription has been started to distribute coal, coke, and provisions. Fifty tons of coal and coke have been distributed, besides large quantities of bread, &c.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. If the Government would provide a harbour of refuge in this bay, which is badly needed, it would, by giving employment in the neighbourhood, greatly relieve the distress.

SALTASH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 2,745. Rateable Value (1892–93), £7,616.

Letter from *R. C. Revell*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, entirely due to the severe weather.

2. (*a*) Relief by Public Authority. On February 9th the Works and Sanitary Committees met and instructed the Borough Surveyor to proceed at once with certain improvements required to be done, so that work should be provided for the unemployed, which could be done even in the severe state of the weather; average daily number, 21. The Surveyor has since reported that all the unemployed who have made application have been provided with work. A public subscription was made in the borough, and on Saturday, 9th, 64 persons were relieved, and on Saturday, 16th, 82. This relief was chiefly given to old persons and sick. As it was principally given on those two dates, one cannot strike a daily average.

3. The weather being now milder, other work is required, and therefore there are not so many employed by Public Authority.

4. Should the weather still continue severe, it is proposed to continue as we are going on, as the means adopted appear to meet the distress.

STOKE-UPON-TRENT MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 24,027. Rateable Value (1892-93), £78,397.

Letter from *J. B. Ashwell*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, which is due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, and also to the severity of the weather.

2. The distress is being met by public subscriptions and voluntary agencies, and upwards of 500 families are supplied with bread and soup three times a week, and coal once a week, and 500 will be the average number of families relieved during the week ended Saturday, 16th February.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. So long as the severe weather continues the distress will be relieved by public subscriptions; and so soon as the frost disappears, the distress will not be exceptional, as work will be forthcoming for the present unemployed.

SUDBURY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (WEST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 7,059. Rateable Value (1892-93), £18,948.

Letter from *R. Mattingly*, Mayor, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE has not been, as compared with previous years, and as regards number, any exceptional distress arising from want of employment, but the period of non-employment has been considerably lengthened by the severe weather.

2. A Public Committee has been formed, as in some recent years, to give employment in wood-cutting, heads of families receiving the preference. By this means, for every 20*s.* subscribed, about 50*s.* has been paid in wages. The average daily number so relieved during the week ended 16th February was about 60. All the voluntary agencies, such as the soup kitchen, the Coal and Blanket Society, and the religious bodies, have extended their operations to meet the emergency.

3. A register of unemployed has been kept this year by the committee above-named, and casual employment has been found for many men.

4. I have no suggestion to make beyond that contained in Answer No. 2, which has proved very successful here.

TAUNTON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 18,026. Rateable Value (1892-93), £76,130.

Letter from *W. H. Fowler*, Mayor, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE has been considerable distress in this town and neighbourhood, caused entirely by the severe weather.

2. In Taunton we have a permanent "Relief Fund," managed by a committee. The funds are raised by public subscription, and have always been sufficient to meet any distress. We are at present relieving 400 odd people and families per diem at a cost of about 23*l.* A great deal is also being done by private charity. We are quite able here to meet the distress without help from the State or public authorities.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

THETFORD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 4,247. Rateable Value (1892-93), £16,400.

Letter from *E. Frost*, Mayor, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district now. The few men out of employment have been set to work by the public authority in raising material for the roads, &c.

No unemployed register kept.

No suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving distress, further than allowing temporary relief to industrious poor in exceptionally severe weather.

TORQUAY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DEVON).

Population (1891), 25,534. Rateable Value (1892-93), £137,009.

Letter from *F. S. Hex*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, but chiefly due to the severe weather.

2. Relief works organised by the Town Council, and supervised by the Borough Surveyor, found employment for periods of four days for the following numbers during the week ended 16th February, viz.:—

Skilled labour (*i.e.*, masons, painters, plasterers, &c.)	† 44
Unskilled labour	*163
Total	207

and 58 men were employed in the usual way in connection with the extension of the water undertaking of the Council. In the week ended 23rd February 1895 the numbers were † 60 and * 127 respectively.

3. A temporary register was opened about three weeks since, and resulted in 442 applications being received, representing 282 married men (women 282, children 753) and 160 single men, of which 301 were unskilled labour and 141 skilled labour, or a total of 1,477 persons.

On the 25th February, 33 of skilled labour take the place of a similar number who completed their four days on the 23rd instant, and on Tuesday next, 26th instant, 100 of unskilled labour will take the place of a like number who complete their four days on the 25th instant, and so on, as long as the Relief Fund permits. In addition to above, the Council have put in hand works of painting carts and railings round the pleasure grounds. The amount subscribed by the public is 500*l.*, and the probable sum to be paid in extra wages by the Council is 150*l.*, or a total of 650*l.*, towards relieving the exceptional distress in this borough. A large sum has also been expended through the medium of the Mendicity Society, and other channels.

WORKINGTON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 23,490. Rateable Value (1892-93), £63,336.

Letter from *J. Warwick*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is and has been for a considerable time past exceptional distress, principally owing to the depression in the iron and steel industries, and this is somewhat intensified by the severe weather.

2. The Corporation applied for a loan of 800*l.* for sewerage works, and the inquiry took place in September last, but the sanction was only received on the 21st instant. The Corporation had in mind given employment to 16 or 20 men on this particular work, and they regret the delay in receiving the sanction of your Honourable Board. I beg also to inform you that free breakfasts are given to about 1,000 children attending the schools. In addition to this, there are some private charities, but no organized agency has been formed to relieve the distress.

A register was opened about 12 months ago, but the unemployed did not avail themselves of it.

Suggestions.—My Council are of opinion that municipal authorities should be empowered to levy a small tax upon ground rents, and the revenue arising therefrom to be applied to public permanent improvements. The Council would also respectfully suggest that the Government should grant loans, free of interest, during periods of exceptional distress for carrying out relief works, and so give temporary employment to the unemployed. I am also directed to inform you that there are 300 *bonâ fide* unemployed in the borough.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

ABERAYRON URBAN DISTRICT (CARDIGAN).

Population (1891), 1,273. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. H. Jones*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

THERE is no distress in this district arising from either circumstances peculiar to the locality or from the severe weather.

ABERGAVENNY URBAN DISTRICT (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 7,743. Assessable Value (1892-93), £24,876.

Letter from *J. T. Rutherford*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is a considerable amount of distress in this district caused by the severe weather.

2. Soup and bread have been distributed daily to about 450 distressed persons, for more than three weeks, by means of voluntary donations and assistance.

3. There

3. There is no unemployed register. About 40 additional labourers have been employed by the Urban District Council in breaking stone or other work, and this has afforded some relief to the distressed.

4. It is not easy to suggest means for relieving distress. District Visitors have been appointed to administer relief in kind, by a Distress Relief Committee, by means of voluntary donations for such purpose, to such persons as the Visitors may see to be in want. The funds available for this purpose are, however, limited.

ABERTILLERY URBAN DISTRICT (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 11,094. Assessable Value (1892-93), £28,981.

Letter from *J. A. Shepard*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is not a great deal of distress in this district, and what distress there is is due to irregular work and the severe weather.

2. A Voluntary Relief Committee has been formed, and 66 men out of employment were relieved for the week ending Saturday, the 16th instant.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. The Council, as soon as the weather breaks up, will have several public works in hand, viz., excavation for new works at their Gas Works, a pipe laying contract for the new Water Works, and they will be able to put on a considerable number of those out of employment.

ABRAM URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 4,309. Assessable Value (1892-93), £26,799.

Letter from *W. Aspinall*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

THERE does not appear to be any exceptional distress in the Abram District, either from the severe weather or other circumstances, the chief industry being coal mining, the miners having almost full work.

No unemployed register is kept.

ADLINGTON URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 4,190. Assessable Value (1892-93), £7,789.

Letter from *J. Stanton*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district of this authority.

2. The Surveyor has the authority of the Council to employ any persons in want of employment in removing snow and cleaning the roads. There are no voluntary agencies in the district for the reason stated in answer No. 1.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. See answer to No. 1.

ALDERLEY EDGE URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 2,270. Assessable Value (1892-93), £17,612.

Letter from *A. Crundsen*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress within this Council's district, except on account of the severe weather.

2. Nothing exceptional, in consequence, is being done.

ALNWICK AND CANONGATE URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 6,746. Assessable Value (1892-93), £22,366.

Letter from *R. Middlemas*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is not any exceptional distress beyond what occurs in an ordinary winter.

2. The means to meet what distress there is, by having opened a soup kitchen and tickets, have been given to 202 families, representing 362 men and women and 665 children. One large pint of soup and one penny loaf is given for one penny. The remainder of the soup is sold to a large number of the working class at one penny per pint.

3. The Council have expended 180*l.* in snow casting and removal of snow from the streets.

ASTON MANOR URBAN DISTRICT (WARWICK).

Population (1891), 68,639. Assessable Value (1892-93), £155,680.

Letter from *J. Ansell*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district at the present time, but such distress is due entirely to the severity of the weather.

2. The distress is being met by the Aston Manor Relief Association, and by the usual parochial agencies, assisted largely by private effort. The average daily number of families relieved by the various agencies during the week ended the 16th instant was upwards of 1,200, and, in addition, 1,000 children attending the elementary schools received one free meal per day.

3. No register of the unemployed is kept.

4. The Chairman has no suggestion to offer for further means of relieving the distress in the district, as he is of opinion, which opinion is shared by many others, that the existing agencies meet the demand, and that, with an improvement in the weather, the necessity for exceptional relief will cease.

ATHERTON URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 15,833. Assessable Value (1892–93), £51,838.

Letter from *R. J. Martin*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THE letter from the Clerk of this Council to your Board, dated the 16th instant, shows that before the present hard frost had commenced there were a number of able-bodied men in this district unable to find employment. And, so far as has been ascertained, that was due to the long depression in the coal-mining industry chiefly. It is stated that the local collieries are probably employing at present about 100 fewer men than formerly. A dispute at a colliery in the adjoining district of Tyldesley has also caused about the same number to be unemployed during the past two or three months, and this may have affected this district also. Except the collieries, the works in the district seem to be fully employed. The number of unemployed has no doubt been increased by the long and severe frost, but probably not to a very large extent.

2. The letter above mentioned shows also that before the frost the Council were finding some work for those unable to obtain it elsewhere, but the frost has made it impracticable to continue that work. There has been no organised attempt to relieve the distress by other means than the Poor Law.

3. An unemployed register has not hitherto been kept here, but the Council have now ordered one to be opened at their office as a means of ascertaining to what extent the scarcity of employment prevails.

4. The Council make no suggestion as to means for relieving the distress, but their officials have instructions to re-open the works mentioned in the Clerk's letter of the 16th instant as soon as the weather will permit.

BARRY URBAN DISTRICT (GLAMORGAN).

Population (1891), 13,278. Assessable Value (1892–93), £95,010.

Letter from *J. A. Hughes*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THE Chairman is of opinion that there is not any exceptional distress in this district. There has, however, been a certain amount of distress owing to the severe weather.

2. The District Council determined to find employment for those who were out of work owing to the severe weather, and those were chiefly men connected with the building trade. The men were employed in the construction of a new road, and they were taken on subject to the following conditions :—(*a*) Preference was given to married men, or men who were supporting families. (*b*) Each man applying for work had to produce a note from his late employer stating that he had been working in this district, and was unable to follow his employment owing to the severe weather. This precaution was taken in order to avoid an influx of men from neighbouring districts, and also it was the desire of the Council to support those who were out of work owing to the severe weather. (*c*) The Surveyor was instructed, by means of his clerks and assistants, to make inquiries in every case as to whether the answers given by the various applicants for work were correct, and whenever they proved to be incorrect the workman was to be discharged. I enclose herewith a statement signed by the Surveyor showing the number of men relieved during the week ended Saturday, the 16th. I may add that a special meeting of the Barry and Cadoxton Burial Board was held on Saturday evening, the 16th instant, and nine men were employed under similar conditions to those given above at the local cemetery. They were employed in removing a hedge.

3. No unemployed register is maintained in this district.

4. The Chairman has instructed me to say that he is not prepared to make any suggestion for the purpose of relieving distress owing to several large contracts, namely :—(1) The construction of a large dock ; (2) the construction of a railway ; (3) the construction of a road and railway, being now in progress in this district. The local distress owing to the severe weather was, in the opinion of the Chairman, met by the work provided by the local authority as detailed above.

(STATEMENT above referred to, showing Number of Men Employed by the Council from Saturday, 9th February, to Saturday, 23rd February, in constructing portion of New Roadway in the District).

DAY OF WEEK.	Date. February	Number of Men Employed.	Number of Horses and Carts.
Saturday	9	21	3
Monday	11	83	5
Tuesday	12	101	12
Wednesday	13	120	14
Thursday	14	126	17
Friday	15	128	17
Saturday	16	128	17
Monday	18	140	17
Tuesday	19	121	17
Wednesday	20	124	15
Thursday	21	124	12
Friday	22	126	13
Saturday	23	123	13

All these men were unable to follow their usual work owing to the severe frost.

23rd February 1895. *J. C. Pardoe*, Surveyor.

BASLOW AND BUBNELL URBAN DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 864. Assessable Value (1892-93), £4,068.

Letter from *E. Hodgkinson*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress; owing to the severe weather the agricultural labourers, masons, and many others are out of employment, and in want.

2. No public fund has been raised; considerable assistance has been rendered by a few individuals.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. A public fund will have to be raised if the severe weather continues, as tradespeople are suffering equally.

BENWELL AND FENHAM URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 10,517. Assessable Value (1892-93), £24,306.

Letter from *H. Dalton*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, although there are a number of people kept out of employment by the severity of the weather.

2. Nothing has as yet been done by public authorities to meet any distress that may have arisen from this cause, but there are several voluntary agencies at work for the purpose. It is somewhat difficult to get particulars of the relief given by these agencies; but so far as can be ascertained, during the week ended Saturday the 16th inst., 186 free breakfasts were given away, equal to an average of 31 each day, and 36 parcels of groceries were given away, an average of six parcels per day, also 15 pairs of boots (new) were given away during the week, and a large quantity of cast-off clothing.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The Chairman has no suggestions to make.

BEXLEY URBAN DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 10,605. Assessable Value (1892-93), £44,541.

Letter from *S. Cannon*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district beyond that caused by the late severe weather.

2. The Urban District Council have employed from 40 to 50 extra men to assist in clearing the roads, and a voluntary fund has been raised, from which from 80 to 100 people per day have been relieved in kind since the 16th instant.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. No suggestions to make.

BILSTON URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 23,453. Assessable Value (1892-93), £47,173.

Letter from *S. B. Cole*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is distress in this district arising from bad trade, and particularly from the severe weather.

2. This authority has spent about 150*l.* in the employment of men to cleanse the streets and break stone, in addition to the amount usually spent for such purposes. Voluntary agencies are relieving numbers by gifts of food; but I cannot state the daily number relieved during the week ended 16th February.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

BINGLEY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 10,023. Assessable Value (1892-93), £23,938.

Letter from *R. Armistead*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

THE district of Bingley comprises the town proper, and a small surrounding area, having a rateable value of 31,000*l.*, and an area of 970 acres, or thereabouts.

1. There is exceptional distress in the district, caused principally by the severe weather, and aggravated by the depressed state of the spinning and wool-combing departments of the staple trade of the district; but the depression has not reached what might be termed an acute stage, and has been, to some extent, relieved by the better employment for weavers, which, at the present time, is good. Generally, there is better employment in the staple trade than was the case in the early part of 1894.

2. The public authorities have taken no action to meet the distress, but voluntary agencies have been distributing during the last few weeks an average of 20*l.* a week, and during the week ended 16th February the average daily number relieved was 85.

3. An unemployed register has not been kept; but I have received instructions to open a register for out-of-door labourers, and a notice to this effect has been posted to-day.

4. The Council have decided that if it is shown by the register that distress exists amongst the out-door labourers, to find employment for the same in road-making at the rate of 4*d.* per hour.

BINGLEY OUTER URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 9,261. Assessable Value (1892–93), £30,142.

Letter from *W. F. Vignall*, 23rd February 1895.

1. IN the district of the Bingley Outer District Council there is no exceptional distress this winter.

2. No exceptional means are being taken by either the public authorities or by voluntary agencies to relieve distress.

3. An unemployed register has not been opened.

4. The District Council have no suggestions to make with reference to the matter.

BIRKDALE URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 12,387. Assessable Value (1892–93), £64,392.

Letter from *T. A. Clinning*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.

2. Voluntary agencies are distributing food daily. The local authority employing men to keep the streets clear of snow.

3. No unemployed register kept, because we have no staple trade.

4. No suggestions to make.

BOGNOR URBAN DISTRICT (WEST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 4,104. Assessable Value (1892–93), £14,284.

Letter from *A. L. Staffurth*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in Bognor beyond that caused by the recent severe weather. There is a good amount of work to be had in ordinary weather, and the Council are just about to proceed with a scheme of storm water drainage, involving an expenditure of 850*l.*

BOWNESS-ON-WINDERMERE URBAN DISTRICT (WESTMORLAND).

Population (1891), 2,061. Assessable Value (1892–93), £12,642.

Letter from *G. H. Pattinson*, Chairman, 22nd February, 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district. There are undoubtedly many persons out of work owing to the frost, but the people are as a rule provident, and those who are not, or who have been unfortunate and are in distress, their need is being met by private charity.

BUILTH URBAN DISTRICT (BRECKNOCK).

Population (1891), 1,414. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *H. Lloyd*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THE distress in Builth has been unusually severe this winter, not on account of bad trade, but especially has been brought about by the Arctic weather we have had here. We have always had a number of men with their families loafing about here, doing odd jobs now and then, and managing to somehow earn a precarious living when it suited them to work. The severe weather has caused great distress amongst them. As regards the unemployed, who are thrown out of work through the inclemency of the weather, and who number about 24, and who, when the weather is favourable, have regular work, the greater number of them are skilled masons and their labourers, while many others are on half or three-quarter time employed by their employers in dressing stones preparatory for building with.

2. The Urban Council of Builth could do nothing more than offer the unemployed a job at stone-breaking, although the stone will not be required by them for some time. Four applied, and have kept steadily to the work. A relief fund has been formed, and is doing good work; 343 were relieved last week, 16th February, at irregular times, by tickets for goods, value 2*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.*, on grocers, &c., also soup was distributed with loaves of bread, also cheese. This week we have kept up the distribution, and no destitute, or partly destitute, one has been sent away empty-handed. Where people have been too proud or too ashamed to make known their poverty things have been sent to them. The Vicar has also a fund which is being well distributed.

3. Both the Vicar and the relief committee have the names of the unemployed down, also the names of the parties applying for relief. This has been got at by applications, also by personal visits to the homes.

4. I do not think we can do much more here than we are doing at the present time. The weather is now breaking, and if the change continues plenty of employment will be at once obtainable.

BURGESS HILL URBAN DISTRICT (EAST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 4,145. Assessable Value (1892–93), £18,632.

Letter from *A. F. Hardwick*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress. It is due entirely to the severe weather.

2. This Authority has provided relief works for all able-bodied male persons in digging and levelling land on the Sewage Farm. Such works were not commenced until the 18th instant. The average number of persons availing themselves of such works to the present time has been 50 per day.

A voluntary fund, to which about 105*l.* have been subscribed, has been established. 25*l.* thereof have been given to this Authority to be expended in payment of labour on the relief works. The remainder is being applied to relief in food. Upwards of 1,000 dinners have been given to Board School children. About 250 adults have been relieved during the present week.

3. No unemployed register has been kept.

4. So far as this district is affected, the distress is purely temporary, and will disappear with the frost. This Authority has no suggestions to make.

CARNFORTH URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 2,680. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *E. Barton*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. IN this Urban District of Carnforth, with a population of about 4,000, there is no exceptional distress, as a very large majority of the residents are employed in occupations that the severe weather does not affect.

2. What distress there is has been fully met by voluntary agency.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. I have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving distress, inasmuch as it does not exist.

CARSHALTON URBAN DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 5,425. Assessable Value (1892–93), £26,209.

Letter from *J. Tyler*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, which has been very keen during the hard weather, not in any way due to anything peculiar to this locality, but due entirely to the severity of the weather.

2. Nothing has been done to meet the distress by public authorities. By voluntary agency a fund has been raised amounting to over 130*l.*, practically the whole of which has been distributed through a committee formed for the purpose. About 300 families were relieved during the week ended the 16th instant, but in some of these cases there was not separate daily relief on every day in the week.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. My suggestions are :—(*a.*) That recommendations which your Board may make to local authorities shall be, if possible, of a practical kind, and I refer to this because the Circular Letters usually sent out suggest setting men on outside work, which is a total impossibility in hard frost, and which impossibility to work out of doors is the sole cause of the distress. (*b.*) That any action by your Board shall be taken much more promptly instead of, as now, bringing the question up when the frost and the distress have simultaneously practically disappeared. To this end I submit that your Board should deal with the question continuously during the year until a practical solution has been arrived at, and the local authorities placed in a position to act on their own initiative when and as often as need may require. (*c.*) To secure the passing of statutes which would enable payments out of the Imperial Exchequer to Parish and District Councils to be placed by them with their bankers at interest, and so left all through the year, and with further power to the Councils to resort, when and as often as necessary, to that fund for the purpose of distributing relief through a committee elected out of their number or outside I submit that any such funds ought not to come out of local rates, which would simply be increasing still further the burdens of the poor. (*d.*) That efforts should be made to secure that legislation take the course of appropriating for the need of the nation further than at present the surplus wealth of the rich, so as to relieve the poor and struggling tradesmen and others from some portion of the heavy local rates they now have to pay, and which recoils on the very poorest in the form of excessive charges for necessaries, and in various other ways.

CHESTERTON URBAN DISTRICT (CAMBRIDGE).

Population (1891), 7,526. Assessable Value (1892–93), £18,217.

Letter from *J. Bester*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

1. I DO not think there is exceptional distress in my district, except a rather large number of men being temporarily unemployed through the severe weather.

2. The District Council has commenced a system of sewerage works. Those out of employment have been largely assisted from town charity, by the Vicar and Churchwardens.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. In a few days there will be ample work in the district.

DARLASTON URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 14,422. Assessable Value (1892–93), £23,828.

Letter from *J. Yardley*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE has been distress of somewhat exceptional severity due chiefly to the severe weather, but trade depression is no doubt accountable for some of it.

2. The District Council has employed a larger number of hands than usual in clearing away the snow, keeping the channels free, and cleansing the streets. Voluntary agencies have also been at work, and a committee, composed chiefly of the members of the Council, have been able, at different centres in the town, to distribute soup and bread, which has considerably mitigated the suffering. Upwards of 2,830 dinners were served out to children and adults during the week ended 16th February through this agency; in addition to which there have been a large number of distributions by private individuals. The population of the town is 15,000.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. No suggestion to offer. I think that with the approach of milder weather the exceptional distress will have passed away.

DOLGELLEY URBAN DISTRICT (MERIONETH).

Population (1891), 2,467. Assessable Value (1892–93), £5,042.

Letter from { *J.M. Jones*, Chairman, / *W. R. Davies*, Clerk, } 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is an exceptional distress in this district, and such as has not been experienced for many years. It is occasioned, for the most part, by the severe weather.

2. A committee was appointed by this Council, after the receipt of the Local Government Board's Circular* of the 11th instant, with the view of considering what could be done. The only matters suggested to the committee were the repairs of roads and footpaths, but they considered that any expenditure upon roads and footpaths during the frosty weather would be injudicious. A number of persons have been employed to break stones. Much has been done in the town by means of voluntary subscriptions to alleviate the distress among the working class. Over 35 tons of coal and a quantity of flannel have been distributed during the last three weeks. A soup-kitchen has also been organised during the last fortnight. The soup, with bread, is distributed on alternate days. During the week ended Saturday the 16th the average number relieved every other day was 140 families, or about 420 persons. (The population of the town is about 2,400).

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. Inasmuch as the district of the Council is of a small area, and as they have no public works (gas or water) under their control, the only employment the Council are able to give is that of breaking stones, and that only to a very limited extent.

EAST BARNET VALLEY URBAN DISTRICT (HERTFORD).

Population (1891), 7,715. Assessable Value (1892–93), £44,185.

Letter from *E. A. Gibson*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress among men employed in the building and other out-door trades in this district, and this is due, I believe, entirely to the very severe weather.

2. Just before Christmas a landslip occurred at Barnet Hill, and the task of repairing the slip found employment for about a dozen men for about a month. Other public work is about to be put in hand, but the extraordinary severity of the weather has rendered it impossible for a start to be made. I understand that all possible steps are being taken by the various charitable organisations in the district to deal with the distress that prevails, and I have reason to believe that they have prevented a very considerable amount of suffering that must otherwise have resulted from the intense cold and the consequent scarcity of work. So much of this charitable work is done privately that it would be impossible to estimate its extent or to ascertain the number of persons relieved by its agency.

3. There is no unemployed register in this district, so far as I am aware.

4. The Council are of opinion that the present agencies in the district, as a whole, deal sufficiently with the existing distress. I am informed that during last week eight able-bodied men residing in this district were employed in the labour yard at the Union Workhouse, and received relief for themselves and their seven wives and twenty-six children. I may add, incidentally, that in consequence of the freezing of the water-pipes generally throughout the district a good many men found employment during the early hours of the day in carrying water from the stand-pipes to houses in need of it, and as the houses are chiefly middle-class villas, the work while it lasted was probably fairly remunerative. In work, arising from the same cause, the Barnet District Gas and Water Company found employment for about 30 men, in addition to their permanent staff. The Great Northern Railway Company have also employed a number of men at the new station buildings now being erected at New Barnet.

EAST MOLESEY URBAN DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 4,666. Assessable Value (1892–93), £27,695.

Letter from *D. Caun*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is undoubtedly exceptional distress in this district, owing to the number of out-door labourers thrown out of work by the severe weather.

2. In the opinion of the Chairman, the action of the ordinary voluntary agencies were sufficient to cope with the distress up to the end of last week, when, seeing funds running low, and no sign of thaw, he called a public meeting, which was held on the 19th instant, and at which sufficient support was received to obviate the necessity of further steps being taken now that the weather has broken.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

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* See note * on page 87.

ETON URBAN DISTRICT (BUCKINGHAM).

Population (1891), 2,494 Assessable Value (1892–93), £22,990.

Letter from *E. C. Austen Leigh*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

I DO not believe there is any exceptional distress in the town of Eton; no steps have consequently been taken to meet a distress that does not exist. nor is any unemployed register maintained.

FARNLEY TYAS URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 599. Assessable Value (1892–93), £1,612.

Letter from *J. Kaye*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

THERE is, so far, no actual distress in the township, and very few people unemployed. I have no hesitation in saying that should any distress occur it will be met voluntarily.

HESTON AND ISLEWORTH URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 26,273. Assessable Value (1892–93), £105,640.

Letter from *P. Watson*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is some distress in the district owing to the severe weather.

2. The District Council has kept all the men whom it could possibly do employed, and has decided to employ some 40 to 50 men per day (the individuals to be changed daily) in excavating gravel and clearing away some sewage sludge. Herewith are replies, from the various ministers of religion and others, 17 in number, to the second question, which, on consideration, I have decided to forward as they are. I should add that there are parochial charities in both the parishes of Heston and Isleworth, both managed by trustees, with the knowledge of the Charity Commissioners.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. I think the provision for the distress is fairly meeting requirements. I suggest that the experience of the various agencies should be recorded for service in future; also means of communication established between each agency, possibly by selected members from each agency being formed into a central district (corresponding with the Urban Sanitary District) committee, who ought to be able, from information (and, if necessary, by control from a centre being exercised) derived from the various agencies to fairly satisfy the two most important questions which arise on these occasions of distress, viz.:—(*a*) Has no person received more than a proper share of benefit? (*b*) Has no case been omitted? I should add that there are private improvement works in hand in the two most thickly-populated parts of the district which are only delayed by the weather, and which will give employment to a large number of men immediately the frost goes.

(Replies above referred to).

St. Paul's, Bath Road.

Six hundred quarts of excellent soup is being given gratis each week to all applicants. One member of the congregation is assisting the Vicar by giving nearly all his time in the systematic search and investigation of cases needing relief, and giving help in all cases. About 10*l.* in shilling tickets for grocery and fuel have been given in a fortnight. This is from the ordinary fund. In addition, the sum of 8*l.* has been given away in fuel principally. No needy person is refused help even if we have to draw upon the summer offertories.

(signed) *A. G. Bull*, Vicar.

St. Stephen's.

We are helping our destitute people, through our two mission women, with bread, coals, groceries, &c. Daily the mission women come to me, and daily help is given. I am also helping by giving work to men—wood-chopping. I cannot tell the average daily number, it so greatly differs; this morning they have brought me lists with the names of 170 families in urgent need; all of whom we are doing our best to assist. My church people have been very kind in assisting me to render this help, but we could give much more help if we had it. We are also helping by means of the soup kitchen, which is now in operation three days a week. The distribution of soup, and occasionally also of bread, is controlled personally by the clergy of Holy Trinity and St. Stephen's. The Isleworth feoffees have also given help here and at Isleworth for poor relief. Our mission women spend their lives amongst the poor in our large parish, and thoroughly know their needs and circumstances. I am strongly of opinion that the help that actually goes into the home is best. Help organised for the whole of Hounslow might probably prevent overlapping, but such organised help may suffer by being too official. Those who personally know the poor and their needs can help best.

(signed) *Henry Layton*, Vicar.

We have not yet started any special committee or society for the object named. We have a tract and benevolent society, which relieves any case they may think deserving, according to our means, which are very small.

(signed) *C. Yates.*

St. John's, Isleworth.

Soup kitchen three times a week (120 quarts). Free teas to men and women out of work, and also to children. Tickets for coal, meat, grocery, from the parish sick and needy fund. The daily average number relieved is about 22.

(signed) *G. B. Gordon Stoles*, Vicar.

Hounslow.

Private help ministered in weekly allowances to known needy cases during time of being out of work.

(signed) *H. Lepine*, Parkside House, Hounslow.

Holy Trinity Parish.

The district visitors of Holy Trinity Parish have distributed grocery, coal, &c., tickets, to the number of 400 since the beginning of the year. In conjunction with St. Stephen's Parish, we have given in each week 500 2lb. loaves, 1,100 quarts of soup. The Philanthropic Society has given dinners to about 1,000 children each week, and breakfasts to working men. The Isleworth Board of Feoffees on Tuesday last voted the sum of 20*l.* for relief of distress in Hounslow, and this will be distributed in the course of a few days.

(signed) *Thomas Harvey.*

Heston.

Sixteen persons (Vicar, Curate, Rector, and 13 visitors) visited last week from house to house, and gave away tickets, which have not yet been returned by the tradesmen. Soup and bread were given last week to 200 families; this week also cocoa and bread and butter to more than 200 children. The Vicar gave away at the vicarage about 100 tickets to men out of work (bread and coals). At a rough guess, the tickets not having been sent in from the villages, I should say at least 70 families were relieved daily during the two weeks from February 4th to 16th.

(signed) *B. Oswald Sharp*, Heston Vicarage.

St. Mary's Spring Grove.

Some members of this congregation have kindly given me about 20*l.* to spend on cases of distress. We had an offering in church on Sunday evening, February 10th, for the same purpose. Myself and lady district visitors have been giving coals and food in all cases where there appears to be a need. I may add that as the number of poor in this parish is limited, I have plenty in hand if there should be a continuance of cold weather. I have also given blankets in many cases

(signed) *J. W. W. Moeran*, Vicar.

We have organised a strong committee and issued an appeal for funds which is being well responded to. The committee sit daily from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., to whom any known case of need is reported and dealt with at once by means of tickets on local tradesmen for supply of food and coals, and am glad to say it is acting a good part. We keep a register of all cases, and dates of relief, and look after them again when we consider their supplies run short. We have two soup kitchens, one in the village, and one Brentford end. We distribute bread also from these places. No money grants are made at present as the committee feel that food and fuel are most necessary during this severe weather, both of which we try our utmost to get into the homes of those in want.

(signed) *W. Wisdom.*

Bell Road.

In connection with the Wesleyan church, Bell Road, there has been no agency of any kind for the relief of distress beyond the fund for the poor arising out of the offertory at sacramental services and private gifts. The people have done in this way to the extent of their power, but the distress has not been compassable. It is impossible to give the average daily number of cases relieved, much having been done quite privately.

(signed) *Arthur Male*, Wesleyan Chaplain.

Isleworth.

A relief committee is formed at Isleworth, which includes Brentford end. Considerable numbers relieved, but I cannot say how many.

(signed) *G. P. Clark.*

Hounslow.

We have assisted with money or kind the most necessitous cases. Only a few for the week ended February 16th from lack of funds.

(signed) *W. E. Whittaker*, Gospel Hall, Hounslow.

Bristow Road, Hounslow.

We are doing nothing to meet the exceptional cases beyond the distribution of a little financial aid as given by members of our church, and what personally I can afford to do.

(signed) *Alfred Sutcliffe.*

In connection with Zoar Baptist Chapel, Staines Road, we have helped to relieve the needy in connection with us, and, personally, I have given towards the relief of the poor in various ways, soup kitchens and poor children's dinners, &c.

(signed) *Alfred Jeffs.*

About a dozen ladies are collecting and adapting second-hand clothing, and distributing the same gratis, principally to children. I cannot at this short notice say how many garments have been distributed.

(signed) *G. Danels*, Deacon, Hounslow Congregational.

There are no parochial agencies in my parish, and, therefore, no record of work done by them. Those able to relieve distress in my congregation are very few. Any help given is done privately and independently by individual members of my congregation.

(signed) *T. O'Sullivan.*

P.S.—The number, nature, and extent of the relief I cannot estimate.

Hounslow.

Hounslow.

I beg to state, in answer to your circular, that since Christmas, the Hounslow Philanthropic Society has given meat tickets to the value of 49*l.*, grocery tickets to the value of 53*l.*, coal and coke, in three issues, to the value of 55*l.*, cases relieved on petition, amounting to 44*l.*, 2,200 children's dinners, costing 22*l.*, and 700 men's breakfasts costing 5*l.* 10*s.* The work is now being carried on without funds, and we earnestly appeal for assistance.

(signed) *A. J. Blades*, Hon. Secretary.
H. Simmonds, Chairman.
J. Morgan Long, Member of Executive Committee.

HOLYWELL URBAN DISTRICT (FLINT).

Population (1891), 3,018. Assessable Value (1892-93), £6,088.

Letter from *J. Williams*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THE area of this Council is small; there are no works within its boundary; the trade of the town is dependent on works and mines within the civil parish, but outside the urban district boundary. Lead mining has always hitherto been a large and productive industry, but prices having fallen to the extent of making the raising of lead ore unremunerative, these mines have been entirely closed. The miners did not leave the district (as shown by the census), but became colliers, quarrymen, and day labourers. The stoppage of these lead mines, and the subsequent stoppage of the limestone quarries, and cement works, and two colleries, also of a large and old-established copper works, has caused exceptional distress and poverty, which has naturally been intensified by the late severe weather.

2. The area and rateable value of the Urban District is so limited that a shilling rate barely produces 320*l.* The Council have thus no means at their disposal for relieving any commercial distress when it may arise. Employment was found for a short period for a number of men in clearing away snow off the streets, which was all that the Council were in position to do. This was found so inadequate that the Council convened a public meeting, and a subscription list was opened, with the result that 75*l.* was collected, an organised house-to-house visitation set on foot, and a distribution of bread and coal carried out. It is computed that about 3,000 individuals have thus been temporarily relieved.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. Inasmuch as the nature of this locality is such as not to afford useful casual employment to either skilled or unskilled workmen, I can only suggest that the public authorities should have easy access to a special public fund, from which they could borrow sums of money to meet such exceptional distress. If any such funds should be distributed by Boards of Guardians, special provision should be made to guard against the recipients being looked upon as paupers or disqualified for exercising the franchise.

HORBURY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 5,673. Assessable Value (1892-93), £23,891.

Letter from *T. Barker*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, and what there is is due to the severity of the weather only, which has almost put an entire stop to out-door labour.

2. The distress is being met by voluntary agency, a relief committee having been formed at the instance of the Chairman. The persons in need have been relieved weekly by tickets representing various amounts available for food at certain shops. The number relieved during the week ended February 16th was 29, and on the 23rd (to-day) 30.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

4. It is considered that there is no necessity for anything further to be done in this district than what has been done.

HORFIELD URBAN DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 8,202. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. Hucker*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. YES, due (*a*) to the severity of the weather, and (*b*) to the fact that whereas of late years there has been a large amount of building in this suburb of Bristol, that building has to some extent now ceased.

2. Nothing by public authorities. The ordinary parochial agencies during the week ended February 16th relieved about 75 families (say, 300 individuals) three times during the week, and during this week (ended February 23rd) have, with the assistance of a grant from the Mayor of Bristol's special fund, relieved about the same number.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

HOVE URBAN DISTRICT (EAST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 28,335. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *H. Endacott*, Town Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. DURING the severe weather a considerable number of able-bodied men have been frozen out of work.

2. The Guardians elected for Hove Parish appealed by circular letter for funds to meet the distress, and the sum given in response to such appeal is over 1,000*l*. Average daily number relieved, 250 (for three days—Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday).

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make. It is hoped that so soon as the weather moderates the distress will pass away.

HUCKNALL TORKARD URBAN DISTRICT (NOTTINGHAM).

Population (1891), 13,094. Assessable Value (1892–93), £25,422.

Letter from , 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the district, but this is only temporary, and due to the severe weather.

2. The above is being met by the public authority and by voluntary agencies. Daily number relieved, 140, by the distribution of tickets for food, and by a room being provided for those who have no shelter.

3. There is no register kept of the unemployed.

4. We have no suggestions to make, because, as a rule, we have not in our midst any number of the unemployed.

ILFRACOMBE URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 7,692. Assessable Value (1892–93), £37,325.

Letter from *F. Brede*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE, fortunately, is not such exceptional distress in this district as to prevent the local authority from satisfactorily dealing with it. Such distress as exists is undoubtedly due to the severe weather.

2. The District Council have, with the knowledge that the Local Government Board will assist them in so doing, started works which will have to be the subject of an application to borrow. By this means a great number of labourers have been provided with work at an adequate wage, which rendered them free from the necessity of applying for parish relief. The inhabitants have also greatly assisted, and by means of providing soup, bread, and coals, the families of the unemployed have also up to the present time been well supplied with food.

3. There is not any register kept of the unemployed, it being unnecessary where all the working class are well known to the Council, the Guardians, and their officers.

4. The Council are not in a position, and are pleased to say that there is no necessity at present, to make any suggestions to your Honourable Board for further measures of relief.

KIRKHAM URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 4,003. Assessable Value (1892-93), £8,564.

Letter from *J. A. Nicholson*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

WE have a considerable amount of exceptional distress on account of the severe weather and the mills not doing well. I called a meeting of our Council. We decided to call a public meeting so as to arrange a scheme to relieve the distress. A committee has been formed; a house-to-house visitation taken place; the public were appealed to for subscriptions. The result has been responded to very favourably. We have relieved about 100 families this week and are giving a hot dinner every day to about 50 children, and will increase the number to 100 during the coming week. We consider the distress is temporary, and hope the means we are taking will be sufficient for our Kirkham district.

KIRKHEATON URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,632. Assessable Value (1892-93), £6,512.

Letter from *D. Smith*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

THE distress in this district has not been very widespread, and is confined almost without exception to delvers, masons, and farm labourers, who are unable to follow their avocations owing to the present severe weather.

With a view to assisting these, the above Council have appointed a sub-committee of three to institute inquiries, and with power to provide some kind of employment for all who may apply, a notice to this effect having been posted in the district. This, I believe, is answering satisfactorily and will be continued so long as the present severe weather lasts.

LEADGATE URBAN DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 4,456. Assessable Value (1892–93), £10,445.

Letter from *J. H. Coupland*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district. The working population of this district consists of miners and ironworkers, who are fully employed.

LLANGOLLEN URBAN DISTRICT (DENBIGH).

Population (1891), 3,225. Assessable Value (1892–93), £7,825.

Letter from *E. R. James*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is a certain amount of distress in this neighbourhood owing to the closing of slab and slate quarries, but chiefly owing to the prolonged severity of the weather.

2. The Urban Council, the Guardians, and a large number of townspeople, have formed themselves into a relief committee for the relief of those who are out of work, and of other urgent cases of distress. Coal and bread has been distributed once a week, and sometimes twice, to about 250 families. The free soup kitchen has also distributed one quart of good meat and vegetable soup, with one quarter of a loaf of bread, to about 140 families every day, without money and without price.

3. No register of unemployed has hitherto been kept, but, in future, one will be kept by the Town Surveyor.

4. The local authority ought to have some power to give work to the unemployed, whereby they might earn their own bread, instead of depending upon a voluntary relief committee, in time of exceptional distress from continued severity of weather or other causes. In a civilised and duly organised country men must have meat or work provided for them. It is a shame upon us to let them starve, or even suffer distress in a land of plenty, in the wealthiest country of the world. This is the general opinion here.

LOWER BRIXHAM URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 7,978. Assessable Value (1892-93), £ ———.

Letter from *W. J. Sanders*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

THERE are many cases of extreme poverty and distress in this town.

The main portion of the distress is peculiar to the locality, and, in order to show this, it will be necessary for me to state that the town is divided into two parts, called higher and lower. The former portion is mainly interested in agriculture, and has a population of some 1,500 persons; here there are many labourers who have had no regular employment for a space of from six and eight weeks, and a large amount of distress prevails there. The lower portion of the town, consisting of some 6,000 persons, are (with the exception of a paint factory, which employs some 20 hands) entirely supported by the fishing industry, there being some 140 vessels of from 40 to 55 tons register, and 80 vessels of 15 to 25 tons, with about 40 smaller craft not registered. The 80 vessels referred to, from 15 to 25 tons register, are a comparatively recent development of the trade, there being over 60 of them built from the years 1887 to 1892. At that time, that is, 1892, as the result of the Local Government Bill, the Devon Sea Fisheries Committee came into existence, and passed bye-laws which came into operation early in 1893; these bye-laws, at one sweep, shut off all trawling in bays, and for the whole of the year. I may here state that, in close proximity to us, we have three very fine bays; viz., Start Bay, Tor Bay, and Teignmouth Bay, each containing many square miles of fishing ground that had from time immemorial been trawled by Brixham fishermen. The 80 vessels mentioned, with the families dependent on them, would mean quite 1,200 persons, and the capital invested in them would mean some 34,000*l*. I mention this to show the importance of the trade that is affected. Last Monday, viz., the 18th instant, I moved a resolution in the Devon Sea Fisheries Committee to the effect that these small vessels should be allowed to trawl in these bays for the months of November, December, and January. I pointed out the distress and suffering these bye-laws had brought to these small trawlers, but, as all previous experience has shown, the motion was lost, not on statistical proof of damage to immature fish; these were in our favour for the months we were asking; but because opposite influences are always too strong for us. And, in proof of that, I should mention that although trawling is entirely prohibited, on the other hand all kinds of seining are permitted in the bays before-mentioned without any restrictions as to methods or time. And the fish so caught is often brought to our trawl-market for sale, and absolute riot has only been prevented by private endeavours to keep the fish away from our market. The facts here stated have been the cause, and are in the future more likely to be the cause, of great distress. Fishermen who have been in the last straits of poverty have gone to these old fishing grounds, either when the weather has been too bad for them to go farther to sea, or because of the scarcity of fish elsewhere, and have in each instance, when caught, been heavily fined; and some three or four summonses are now being issued. Yet the inconsistency of the thing is that seining can, at the same time and place, be carried on to any extent. The distress was acknowledged at the fishery meeting last Monday by an opponent of the trawlers, and that gentleman has given notice of motion to the effect that, at our next meeting, he will move, the condition of the Brixham small trawlers is such as calls for national compensation. I have gone into full length on these matters because of its desperate urgency, and should be glad to supplement it by other information. There have been many augmentations to all previous sources of relief. Sewers are being laid that are giving employment to many who would otherwise be out of work. Some of the worst cases are put at stone-breaking by the District Council. Much actual distress is prevented by the advance of goods on credit to an extent only known to such small towns as ours.

I think material advantage would be given by enabling Councils in old and small towns to consolidate existing loans, many at high rates of interest, and borrow in larger sums, with reduction of interest.

MACHYNLLETH URBAN DISTRICT (MONTGOMERY).

Population (1891), 1,826. Assessable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *H. Vane Tempest*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district except such as may be due to the severe weather, and which is met by the voluntary gifts of private individuals of the town.

When a change in the weather takes place I think matters will resume their normal condition.

MALTON URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 4,910. Assessable Value (1892–93), £13,161.

Letter from *G. S. Cattle*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

THERE has been no extraordinary distress among the working classes in this district, but in some cases the Council have employed men out of work in removing snow from the streets and public footpaths, and that relief has been distributed throughout the town where necessary by a relief committee as in former years.

The severe frost is breaking up, and employment will now be procurable on farms and in gardens, &c.

MARCH URBAN DISTRICT (ISLE OF ELY).

Population (1891), 6,988. Assessable Value (1892–93), £20,035.

Letter from *J. Collingwood*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE has been exceptional distress in this district, during the past few weeks, due chiefly to the prolonged severity of the weather.

2. The annual distribution of bread and flour by the governors of the local charities has assisted some 300 families for the past five weeks, and a relief committee has been assisting (by voluntary effort) a similar number with gifts of coals and provisions for three weeks.

3. No register of the unemployed is kept.

4. I would suggest that where the circumstances will permit, local authorities should endeavour to arrange for the making and improving of roads and footpaths, and the carrying out of public works, and improvements generally, during the winter months, instead of during that period of the year when employment is general, and a good deal of overtime is worked to cope with the demand.

MARKET RASEN URBAN DISTRICT (PARTS OF LINDSEY).

Population (1891), 2,497. Assessable Value (1892–93), £7,438.

Letter from *T. Nettleship*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is, in the opinion of this authority, no exceptional distress in the district.

2. The distress, which is the ordinary concomitant of a winter so severe as that we have been experiencing, has been fully met by voluntary agencies. On four different occasions coal and provisions have been distributed by such agency to 130 families.

3. We have not found it necessary to maintain an unemployed register.

4. We have no suggestions to make, as no exceptional distress, in our opinion, prevails.

MARYPORT URBAN DISTRICT (CUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 12,380. Assessable Value (1892-93), £——.

Letter from *H. P. Senhouse*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THE distress in the district is unprecedented. Within the last few years two large collieries and two large ironworks, each employing a large number of hands, have been closed, throwing a considerable amount of labour on the market. The several industries in West Cumberland, all of which provide work for dock labourers in this district, are very depressed. The steel rail mills, the ironworks, the collieries, and the ship-building yards have all been very slack, and the district has felt the effects both directly and indirectly. The following is an approximation of the number of the unemployed: iron ship-builders, 100; ironworkers, 50; dock labourers, 70; sailors and fishermen, 50; masons and joiners, 40; coal-miners, 70; and others, say 50; total, 430. The shipping trade shows signs of improvement, and during the next few weeks it is probable that the whole of the dock labourers will find employment. The severe weather has added to the general distress, as building has entirely ceased, as well as other kinds of out-door employment.

2. Nothing has been done by the public authorities, or so far as affects employment, by voluntary agencies. A soup kitchen has been opened, and liberally supported by the residents. At the present time about 400 families are supplied

supplied twice a week with soup and bread. In addition, 240 children are supplied with dinner (also soup and bread) twice a week. By this agency about 2,400 pints of soup and 60 stones of bread are distributed weekly. The managers of the Roman Catholic schools give a free breakfast daily to about 100 of their scholars. Occasionally a free tea is provided for between 200 and 300 children.

3. No such register is kept.

4. No suggestions to make. The District Council are of opinion that power to rate or tax ground rents and royalty rents should be given, to enable public works to provide employment to be carried out.

NANTWICH URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 7,412. Assessable Value (1892–93), £17,040.

Letter from *W. Lea*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is some exceptional distress in the building trades, and among labourers engaged in out-door employment, due to the severe weather.

2. Free breakfasts have been given to about 170 poor children, and assistance in urgent cases of want in coal, soup, and bread to persons out of employment from a private fund provided by charitable persons since the commencement of the severe weather On the 15th instant a relief committee of the Council and other persons was formed, and an appeal for subscriptions made to the public to enable the relief to be continued, and during the last week a sum of 25*l.* was expended, and the same is being continued.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

NEWQUAY URBAN DISTRICT (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 1,891. Assessable Value (1892–93), £6,676.

Letter from *M. Williams*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

AFTER consultation with such of my colleagues as I could meet. I hastily summoned a public meeting, which I held last evening. The feeling at the meeting was that the distress in the district is not serious; nevertheless a voluntary agency in the shape of a general and representative committee was then and there formed, and a fund was started to relieve the wants of those families having no members able to work. £4. 12*s.* was raised in the room, and it was freely stated that some 25*l.* would meet requirements, and this can and will be raised. There are some few masons and fishermen out of employment; I announced that such might apply to the Surveyor and should be given work.

To sum up, the distress is not serious, and has now been duly provided for.

NEW SHOREHAM URBAN DISTRICT (WEST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 3,393. Assessable Value (1892–93), £8,474.

Letter from *J. E. Brown*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress, owing entirely to the great severity of the weather.

2. Distribution twice weekly to 150 families of bread, soup, and coals from voluntary contributions.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The fund is all but exhausted, and pecuniary contributions are urgently needed.

NEWTOWN AND LLANLLWCHAIARN URBAN DISTRICT (MONTGOMERY).

Population (1891), 6,610. Assessable Value (1892–93), £18,625.

Letter from *A. Ford*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, arising partly from the depressed state of the local manufactures and partly from the severe weather.

2. Considerable efforts have been made by voluntary agencies to alleviate the distress by providing the necessitous with bread and coal free. No record has been kept of the number of persons relieved.

3. No register of the unemployed is kept.

4. No suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving the distress.

NORDEN URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 3,955. Assessable Value (1892–93), £13,963.

Letter from *R. A. L. Hutchinson*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress exists, except cessation of outside work during the severe weather.

2. No action is taken by the local authority, as the deserving cases are so few; employment for women and children being found in the mills, while private charity and preferential work given to married men by individuals fully meets the requirements of the few cases where there is no money coming in.

3. No unemployed register is kept; the community is too small to need one.

4. We can offer no suggestions to your Committee, but I think it wiser to remark that your suggested works as per your former Circular* would not meet the case if work was needed, as, until the last few days, the whole district has been ice-bound and covered with snow, and in a sheltered, low-lying place the frost is three feet in the ground yet.

NORTH WALSHAM URBAN DISTRICT (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 3,612. Assessable Value (1892–93), £9,021.

Letter from *J. S. Empson*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress within the district of the Council, and it has consequently not been thought necessary to take any special steps with respect to the matter.

NORTON URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, EAST RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,683. Assessable Value (1892–93), £8,322.

Letter from *W. Botterill*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is very little distress in this district, and the voluntary agencies have been able to deal with the same.

There is no register of the unemployed kept.

OAKWORTH URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 5,880. Assessable Value (1892–93), £13,613.

Letter from *A. Bradley*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is in this district a certain amount of distress, owing to the exceptionally severe weather.

2. No systematic steps have been taken by the public authorities to relieve the distress, but a certain amount of promiscuous relief has been given.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

OSWALDTWISTLE URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 13,296. Assessable Value (1892–93), £36,422.

Letter from *W. Sandeman*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress among those employed in factories or workshops, but in consequence of the long-continued frost the out-door workers have suffered to some extent. The number thus affected may be from 40 to 50. An attempt was made two or three days since to get up a street procession of the unemployed, but not more than 16 persons joined it, and three-fourths of that number were street loafers, who never do any work if they can avoid it.

2. A committee of the unemployed has been formed, and subscription books have been taken round the neighbourhood, to which appeal there has been a fairly liberal response. Several private individuals have distributed soup and food, and one gentleman is giving coffee and bread to all children who come every morning. No agencies have been organised for the relief of the distressed, but it is believed that the relief given, as before stated, has been sufficient, so far as is known.

3. No unemployed register has been maintained.

4. The distress which exists being attributable to the continued frost, and a thaw having now commenced, it is expected that out-door work will shortly be resumed. Should this, however, not be the case, my Council see no way in which employment can be given, unless sanction is given to some of the applications for loans which have recently been made.

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* *See* note * on page 87.

PERRY BARR URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 2,310. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *H. Ward*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is not any exceptional distress in this district, but a few agricultural labourers have recently been out of work through the frost.

2. Nothing, it being unnecessary.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

PHILLACK URBAN DISTRICT (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 3,979. Assessable Value (1892–93), £5,673.

Letter from *H. T. Broad*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE are comparatively few exceptional cases of distress in this district, and these are principally due to the severe weather, and have been relieved by voluntary agencies.

2. No special instances of want of employment having come under the notice of the public authority, they have not, up to this time, considered it necessary to provide extra employment on works of a public nature.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. Under the above circumstances, the Urban District Council have no suggestions to offer at present.

PRESTWICH URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 10,902. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *A. W. Grundy*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district at the present time, although, owing to the frost, out-door work is being interfered with, and the number unemployed is more than an average one.

2. Voluntary agencies have been actively engaged in looking up and relieving any cases of actual distress, but there has been nothing to call for special effort. I have no means of estimating the number relieved during the week ended Saturday, 16th instant.

3. No register of the unemployed is kept, nor is it necessary, in so small a district, to make such special provision.

4. I do not think it necessary to make any suggestions. A change in the weather is all that is required to make work plentiful here.

RAWMARSH URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 11,983. Assessable Value (1892–93), £43,552.

Letter from *J. W. Bellamy*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

I AM instructed to inform you that, having received the sanction from your Honourable Board for sewage loan, tenders have been advertised for, and the work will be proceeded with immediately. One of the stipulations in the contract is that "local labour is to be employed on the works in every case where practicable." At present, 13 men only have made application for work.

RHYL URBAN DISTRICT (FLINT).

Population (1891), 6,491. Assessable Value (1892–93), £35,459.

Letter from *E. W. Keatinge*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

THE distress in this locality is due to the severe weather; and to meet it our District Council have found relief work—*i.e.*, removal of land and lowering of sand-hills for improving the sea front, at wages at the rate of 3*d.* an hour for about 50 men (last week and this week). The contractors for sewerage works in progress here have afforded relief work to large numbers of men, thrown out of their proper work in the sewers, at a similar rate of wages. A relief committee have also been meeting daily to give help to several hundreds of families and individuals, in the form of coal, bread, soup, &c. The fund is raised by voluntary subscriptions.

ROYTON URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 13,395. Assessable Value (1892–93), £43,698.

Letter from *T. Bleasdale*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is very little exceptional distress, except amongst out-door workers, in consequence of the long-continued severe weather. This is confined principally to navvies and men employed in the building trade. The great majority of the inhabitants of this district are regularly employed in the cotton mills.

2. A distress fund was opened during the severe weather in the beginning of 1891, when a committee was formed to relieve worthy cases by means of tickets authorising tradesmen to supply the bearer with provisions or clothing, as the case might require, to the value of some stipulated sum, generally from 5*s.* to 7*s.* 6*d.* There was a considerable balance of this fund unexpended, and a meeting of the subscribers has just been held, at which a committee was again appointed to issue orders for provisions, &c., in a similar manner. At the Royton Liberal Club a soup kitchen, aided by subscriptions, has been at work for several weeks, and during the week ended 16th February 1895, the following relief was dispensed:—150 gallons of soup, 300 loaves of bread, and one breakfast to 300 children (coffee and buns). This has also been continued during the present week, and this morning another similar free breakfast was given to upwards of 300 children.

3. A register of the unemployed is not kept.

4. I do not think the distress in this district is so great as to require any further provision. It is almost solely due to the severe weather, and will, I believe, quickly disappear after the termination of the severe frost. I may point out that the Council are engaged on an extensive scheme of sewerage and sewage disposal, upon which upwards of 50,000*l.* has already been expended. As soon as the weather is favourable, further work of that nature will be commenced, and, as was the case with a considerable portion of the work already done, it will be executed by men employed directly by the Council, and not by contractors.

ST. HELEN'S URBAN DISTRICT (ISLE OF WIGHT).

Population (1891), 4,469. Assessable Value (1892–93), £17,445.

Letter from *C. G. Vincent*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE does not appear to be any exceptional distress in the district, and no case has been brought before the Council.

2. Voluntary parochial agency, which has been the same as former years, has met many cases of distress. The Surveyor had received instructions to employ extra labour in cases of distress, but up to the present time no special application has been made to him for work, and less application for work this winter than usual.

3. No register is kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 8,245. Assessable Value (1892–93), £24,650.

Letter from *J. Champion*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

THE exceptional distress which exists is due to the severe weather, and does not arise from circumstances peculiar to the locality.

To meet this distress the District Council have not thought it necessary, even if they were able, to take any steps themselves, but an influential committee of parishioners has been formed who have collected a considerable sum by private contributions, and who meet frequently to distribute the same among the distressed. In addition to this, many of the parishioners are assisted by the Mayor of Exeter, who, having received large sums from contributors outside the city, does not confine his assistance to inhabitants of the city.

No unemployed register is kept.

The Council are of opinion that this distress will pass away as soon as milder weather returns and many of the unemployed are enabled to resume work.

SEGHILL URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 2,269. Assessable Value (1892–93), £4,900.

Letter from *H. Boyle*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. WE have distress in this village at the present time, but it is peculiar to our locality, as Seghill Colliery is a steam coal producing colliery, which product is principally exported, and at this season of the year this trade is generally slack. All our men are partly employed.

2. Nothing is being done by the public authorities. 80 of our workmen out of a total of 600 received 4*s.* each from the Union Fund last pay-day, on account of the short time worked; the other workmen had above the number of days worked stipulated by the Union when support shall be paid.

3. We keep a register.

SHEPLEY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 1,726. Assessable Value (1892–93), £5,349.

Letter from *J. T. Chambers*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THE severe weather has caused exceptional distress amongst out-door workers.

2. The members of the public authority have liberally subscribed to the Old Folks' Gathering Committee, for the relief of deserving persons in Shepley.

3. No register is kept of the unemployed.

4. The Old Folks' Gathering Committee, on the 2nd of February last, entertained 186 old and indigent persons in Shepley to tea, &c., and afterwards distributed small presents of tea, &c., at the tables; cost of this was raised by voluntary subscriptions, and the committee then formed themselves into a committee for the relief of exceptional distress caused by the severe weather. They sent tickets to about 42 families for from 10*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* worth of goods, to be obtained from any storekeeper in the township, and in addition, two soup kitchens have been opened. They have since issued the enclosed circular to all persons in Shepley that are in a position to subscribe, and they will meet again on Monday evening to distribute tickets to the most needful cases. As secretary to the committee I am pleased to say that promises of subscriptions have come in very well, and that we shall no doubt be able to relieve this exceptional distress and tide over the exceptionally severe weather by voluntary effort.

(Circular above referred to).

DEAR SIR,—In consequence of the severe weather, persons in Shepley who have to depend on out-door labour for a living are in very distressed circumstances. The above committee have distributed their balance, and they now feel it their duty to again appeal to you for your sympathy and help.

Any subscription you may feel disposed to give for this object will be gladly received by any member of the committee, and will be well and carefully distributed amongst the deserving people of Shepley.

If you can help the committee by giving the names of any deserving persons for relief, which might otherwise be inadvertently omitted, they will be glad.

SKELMANTHORPE URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,392. Assessable Value (1892–93), £6,828.

Letter from *W. Fisher*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the district, which is due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, also to the severe weather.

2. There has been nothing done to meet the distress by the local authority, but a relief fund has been opened by a committee, and subscriptions to the amount of over 60*l.* have already been subscribed, and relief distributed to upwards of 60 families weekly, not daily.

3. There is no register of unemployed kept.

4. The Board have no suggestions to make beyond what is stated above.

SKELTON AND BROTTON URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 11,842. Assessable Value (1892–93), £67,932.

Letter from *W. Richardson*, Assistant Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress, and hitherto there has been no necessity for any relief agencies other than the Guardians of the Union.

SKIPTON URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 10,376. Assessable Value (1892–93), £23,551.

Letter from *R. Wilson*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

DURING the long protracted storm the distress in Skipton has been great so far as out-door labourers are concerned, though perhaps not so much as in other towns. The Council have not formed any scheme for the provision of work for the unemployed, because of the impossibility of any out-door labour being performed. Measures for the relief of the unemployed and their families have been taken by charitably disposed persons, and the following is a statement of the number of cases in which relief was granted during the week ended 16th February:—By the Charity Organization Society, relief was afforded to 110 adults and 280 children each day; by the Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Committee, 30 adults were relieved daily; and by a number of gentlemen who interested themselves collectively, but apart from the Charity Organization Society and the Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Committee, about 400 persons were relieved each day.

SLAITHWAITE URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 4,570. Assessable Value (1892–93), £17,564.

Letter from *E. Gerdhill*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. DISTRESS in this district is very limited, and such is mainly caused by the exceptional weather.

2. The Local Authority has employed as many persons as possible in clearing the streets of snow and spreading ashes; relief has been given by voluntary agency where special cases of distress existed. The number being so small no record has been taken.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. There is no amount of distress in this district calling for any special effort; principal employment is factory labour, who are not affected by bad weather.

SOUTHALL-NORWOOD URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 7,627. Assessable Value (1892-93), £36,659.

Letter from *N. W. Houlder*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

THE Southall-Norwood Urban District has some exceptional advantages. They arise from the Great Western Railway Company and their Creosoting Yard, the Brentford Gas Company's Works, Mr. Otto Moustead's Margarine Works, recently erected and not now completed, and six other factories (including a flour mill), and the Steamfield Land Syndicate. The Gas Works at the approach of winter take on about 200 extra work-people. At the Margarine Works about 100 more are employed, besides the regular workers, on extra and outside work that is exceptional and will not recur. The Land Syndicate is employing 13 people on drainage and preparations for building. The frost has much increased the labour in the Gas Works, as also in a less degree in other factories, as well as roadmen of the Council. The foregoing reduce to narrow proportions the list of really unemployed. Further, as to the Southall-Norwood District Council, in January, to relieve this class, the Council laid two new sewers, either then wanted or shortly required, anticipating your Honourable Board's sanction for a loan for them, viz., one along White-street and the other in South-road, at an expenditure of rather more than 400*l*. The application for these loans is now before your Board, with further loans for new sewage tanks at the sewage farm, and other new sewers and crossings to roads. On receipt of your Honourable Board's sanction the tanks and crossings would be put in hand at once, and the larger sewers as soon as possible. Besides these, the Council has recently taken on 18 extra men (having families) for drainage work required at the sewage farm. Privately, a special relief fund has been started for the necessitous in the district, supplementing the funds administered by the three clergymen of the Established Church and five other religious bodies and parochial charities. There is also a good deal of individual aid. Whilst there are many cases of temporary hardship caused by the severity of the weather, this district is therefore considerably better off than many others.

There is no register of the unemployed kept.

I would suggest the early sanction of the loans applied for.

SOUTHGATE URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 10,970. Assessable Value (1892-93), £57,361.

Letter from *W. Burrows*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895

1. THERE is not, to my knowledge, any exceptional distress, except that caused by the late severe weather.

2. There are several voluntary agencies at work scattered over the district, and I am informed that they have been fully able to cope with it. The District Council has also placed more men at work than it did before, and the total number of men employed is 67. I am unable to give the number of cases relieved.

3. An employment register as such *per se* is not kept.

4. I have not any suggestions to make in reference to this matter in this district.

STREET URBAN DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 3,535. Assessable Value (1892-93), £7,588.

Letter from *W. S. Clark*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

THERE has been some shortness of employment this winter in the chief staple trade here, that of boot-making, in consequence of the generally bad state of trade in the country, but not to such an extent as to cause general distress. There has been exceptional distress among those employed in the building trade, from the fact that much less building has been done the last few months than for some years past, and there has also been much less employment at the stone quarries from the same reason. In the case of these trades, the last few weeks of severe weather, coming on the top of previous shortness of work, have been very trying, and considerable efforts have been made to relieve the distress by distribution of coals, by the sale of soup below cost price, and by relief given in other ways. This has been done partly by funds raised at the different places of worship, and otherwise by private charity, and to a small extent by a special fund in the hands of the Overseers, available for distribution of coal, and by a public charity known as "Cox's Charity." As the population of Street is only 3,600, and only a small proportion are engaged in the trades affected, the distress has been within manageable compass; probably not more than 100 families would have required relief in the week specified in your question (2); and with the near prospect of the break up of the frost I think all real cases of hardship will be fairly met by the different agencies already at work.

There is no unemployed register kept here.

THURLSTONE URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,735. Assessable Value (1892-93), £10,374.

Letter from *J. Wadsworth*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

I AM desired by the Council to say that they are in full sympathy with the promotion of the objects for the benefit of the unemployed mentioned in the circulars, and so far as the means of this Council and the weather have permitted, they have, to relieve the distress during the recent frost, given employment to a considerable number of steel-workers, builders, and others, chiefly in the clearing away of huge snow-drifts on the public roads in this locality, and this Council will continue to find as much work as possible, should the distress, which, however, they believe is only temporary, owing to the severe weather, continue. Relief in kind has also been given from funds in connection with local churches, and also by private individuals.

THURSTONLAND URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 933. Assessable Value (1892–93), £3,864.

Letter from *J. Kaye*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

THERE has not, so far, been any great amount of distress in this district. Last month the District Council decided to place a paper at their rooms, whereon any person out of employment might register his name, when the surveyor was instructed to employ them on the roads, in the order in which they applied, and distribute the work fairly amongst them. Up to the present time only 14 persons have applied for work, and out of this number several are out of employment in consequence of the stoppage of a quarry in the neighbourhood. There is no reason to think that any distress there may be will not be voluntarily relieved, or in the manner stated above.

TOTTENHAM URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 71,343. Assessable Value (1892–93), £219,820.

Letter from *E. Patten Huggett*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress, due partially to the fact that the district is a very poor one immediately adjoining the Metropolis, and receiving an enormous number of the wage-earning class who ordinarily work in London, and also to the recent exceptional severity of the weather.

2. The Urban Sanitary Authority is, so far as circumstances will permit, employing as many as possible of the unemployed, and have been doing so for some time past. I am unable to give you the numbers relieved by voluntary agencies per day, but am aware that at several of the Board and Church schools distributions of food have been largely made during the recent severe weather, principally to children, however; I am also aware that other local agencies are at work in the distribution of food. The District Council and Guardians for the parish have formed themselves into a joint committee, and have made a public appeal for funds to enable them to provide food for deserving cases. I enclose one of the notices herewith.

3. An unemployed register is maintained, with the result that when the District Council require workmen they send to those whose names are upon the register.

4. I would suggest that with a view to future periods of distress, the Local Government Board should give such instructions to the Guardians, as the body authorised by law to give relief, as will enable them to act promptly.

(Notice above referred to).

Parish of Tottenham.—Relief of the Unemployed.

Owing to the unprecedented severity of the weather a large number of men are out of employment.

Every effort will be made to find work for them, but in the meantime there is a great amount of distress, which can only be relieved by the contributions of those who are disposed to give aid in this extremity.

The District Council and Guardians of the Poor in Tottenham unite in an appeal for funds to enable them to provide food for deserving cases, and they hope to receive a hearty and immediate response.

Contributions can be sent to the hon. treasurer, Mr. Edward Crowne, 712, High-road, Tottenham; or to Mr. F. Shelton, hon. secretary, Lower Tottenham, and will be acknowledged in the local press.

19th February 1895. *E. Patten Huggett*, Chairman of the Committee.

TOW LAW URBAN DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 4,554. Assessable Value (1892-93), £6,448.

Letter from *E. Milburn*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is not any exceptional distress in the district.

2. Nothing being done.

3. No unemployed register maintained.

4. No suggestions to offer.

WALMER URBAN DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 4,565. Assessable Value (1892–93), £14,738.

Letter from *F. W. Hardman*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

ALTHOUGH the prolonged severe weather had the effect of stopping work in most trades, yet it cannot be said that exceptional distress exists in this district. The recent change in the weather has now made it possible for most labourers to return to work.

No special agencies for relief have been found necessary or been employed, and no register of unemployed has been kept.

WALTON ON-THE-HILL URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 40,3 4. Assessable Value (1892–93), £104,204.

Letter from *W. Smith*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the district, due almost entirely to the severe weather.

2. The Council, in consequence of the frozen ground, are unable to find work for extra labour. It is reported that the Guardians are taking special measures to relieve distress. A voluntary relief committee has been formed, and by the help of district visitors are granting assistance of food and coals to destitute persons who are not being relieved by the Guardians. This week between 300 and 400 families have been assisted.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. Beyond the methods indicated above we have no suggestion to offer. The Walton-on-the-Hill Urban District Council have not found that there was any lack of work until the frost set in; extra work for bricksetters, paviors, and labourers, has been going on in the district for upwards of 12 months, and will continue for several months after the frost has gone.

WARSOP URBAN DISTRICT (NOTTINGHAM).

Population (1891), 1,467. Assessable Value (1892–93), £2,848.

Letter from *Rev. R. Fitz-Herbert*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE would be no particular distress, except for the severe weather, which has caused loss of employment to men working on the railway (D. and L., east to west) Chesterfield to Lincoln, and to masons and some labourers.

2. About two dozen families have been relieved by voluntary contributions during the last fortnight, once in the week.

3. No register of the unemployed is kept, as the necessity has never arisen.

4. Temporary help is, in my opinion, all that is required.

WEST CLAYTON URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 1,541. Assessable Value (1892–93), £4,508.

Letter from *W. Waites*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

No exceptional distress in this district.

WHEATLEY URBAN DISTRICT (OXFORD).

Population (1891), 920. Assessable Value (1892–93), £1,692.

Letter from *F. H. Alden*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district. What distress there is is that usual at this season, and is relieved by gifts of coal and food by the different religious agencies.

The Council has also arranged to employ more labour by putting on men to work alternate periods.

WHICKHAM URBAN DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 9,174. Assessable Value (1892–93), £26,432.

Letter from *T. Lambert*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, what does exist being in consequence of the severe weather.

2. The Council is at present widening some roads, and has been able to give employment to practically all the known unemployed in the district.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained in this district.

4. The Council have no suggestions to make with regard to the fourth query.

WHITTLESEY URBAN DISTRICT (ISLE OF ELY).

Population (1891), 3,556. Assessable Value (1892-93), £5,398.

Letter from *B. Weldon*, Clerk 23rd February 1895.

THERE is not any exceptional distress in this district.

WIGSTON MAGNA URBAN DISTRICT (LEICESTER).

Population (1891), ———. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *A. H. Burgess*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE has been a little exceptional distress in the district owing to the late severe weather.

2. Subscriptions have been raised by a voluntary committee, and money and food have been distributed to meet the worst cases.

3. No register of the unemployed has been made.

4. The Chairman has no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving the distress as he thinks it has been sufficiently met by the agency mentioned above, and has now almost ceased with the return of milder weather.

WIGTON URBAN DISTRICT (CUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 3,965. Assessable Value (1892-93), £8,574.

Letter from *E. H. Banks*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district, but such as exists is due to the severity of the weather.

2. The District Council have expended a considerable sum by the employment of a large number of men in the removal of snow; voluntary relief agencies for the distribution of food and coal have also taken up the matter.
The average daily number relieved by these agencies during week ended Saturday, February 16th, is 481; this number includes children.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. The Council have no suggestions to make.

WILMSLOW URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 6,344. Assessable Value (1892-93), £28,887.

Letter from *J. Beaumont*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the neighbourhood, almost entirely on account of the severe weather.

2. The local district provident society have made a special public appeal for funds, and have relieved about 200 cases during the week ended February 16th. A soup kitchen has been opened, supported by voluntary contributions, and a great many people have availed themselves of it.
This is almost entirely an agricultural district, and all out-door labour is suspended; drainage works are being carried on, but a temporary stoppage of work is caused, and about 30 men are therefore without work. The public response to appeals has been so satisfactory that the distress has been very promptly and satisfactorily relieved.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

WIMBLEDON URBAN DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 25,761. Assessable Value (1892-93), £183,718.

Letter from *W. H. Whitfield*, Clerk, 2rd February 1895.

1. THERE has been exceptional distress in the district, and it has been due mainly to the severe weather.

2.—(A.) *Relief Works.*—Between January 22nd and February 7th, 78*l.* 17*s.* was spent by the District Council in removing snow from the roads and paths. The men were employed at 6*d.* per hour, and in this way 3,154 hours' employment were given. Since the 7th instant, 898 days' employment on other work at 4*s.* per day

day has been afforded to 282 men, averaging 3¼ days each. The more able-bodied men were engaged in laying a new surface-water sewer and in cleaning out an existing one. These works cost 116*l.* 4*s.* The less able-bodied men were employed in sifting house refuse at the sewage farm. The latter work afforded 2,536 hours' employment at a cost of 63*l.* 8*s.* (B.) *Charitable Relief.*—A strong committee was formed under the auspices of the District Council, and a sum of 600*l.* was collected. This is being distributed by the committee with the aid of sub-committees. About 526 families had been relieved up to Saturday last by tickets for coal, groceries, and, in some cases, meat. In addition to this, 3,100 children's breakfasts had been provided by one agency, and 3,296 meals to adults and children had been provided by another. There has also been a large quantity of soup distributed at the various soup-kitchens which have been aided by the District Council Committee, but of this I have no details. Help has doubtless been given privately in many cases quite independently of the District Council Committee.

3. An unemployed register was started on the 7th instant by the District Council. Up to the 21st instant 216 names had been inscribed on the register. I am unable to state how many have found employment, as, unfortunately, the men do not report this. During the last two days no additional names have been registered.

4. It is believed that the funds which have been placed at the disposal of the committee have enabled them to deal with all acute cases.

Wimborne Urban District (Dorset).

Population (1891), 3,647. Assessable Value (1892-93), £15,625.

Letter from *H. O. Chislett*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

The distress prevailing has been and is being met and satisfied by local voluntary agencies.

Wiveliscombe Urban District (Somerset).

Population (1891), 1,428. Assessable Value (1892-93), £2,749.

Letter from *W. Hancock*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. The population of the area of this Council and that of the Wiveliscombe Parish without is about 2,400. There is considerable exceptional distress in both, principally owing to the long-continued and unexampled severity of the weather, but supplemented by great agricultural depression and a general want of life in all kinds of business.

2. A relief fund has been raised by private subscription, and assistance has been given for some weeks past to about 54 families of the unemployed and those in actual want, in sums varying from 5*s.* to 3*s.* per week. About 89 aged persons in receipt of parish pay have also been given 1*s.* per week each to provide firing, which it was hardly possible for them to do out of their parish pay. Excellent soup is also distributed daily by a private arrangement of some ladies to about 45 families.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. This Council has not seen its way to take any steps except by giving as much work as it can in its own department, and it can offer no suggestion for the relief of casual distress, except that already given in the answer to your Question No 2.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

Alnwick Rural District (Northumberland).

Letter from *H. W. Walton*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

Population (1891), 12,176. Rateable Value (1892-93), £113,996.

There is no exceptional distress in this district.

ATCHAM RURAL DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 20,916. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Everest*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no very exceptional distress in this district. The weather has been unusually severe and the work of the agricultural labourer and others has been considerably interfered with, but the labouring population in this district to a large extent anticipate the necessities of the season, and with a little help from their employers and other residents, provide for the necessities of the winter months. The heavy fall of snow provided work for additional men on the highways to clear the roads for traffic, and this assisted to some extent to counterbalance the unusual severity of the season.

2. There are no organised relief agencies at work, the distress being met by personal benevolence of the character stated in Reply 1.

3. No unemployed register is kept, and such a register would be of little use, because on the breaking-up of the weather, the labourers will resume their usual employment.

4. The Chairman can offer no opinion upon this, as the needs of districts vary.

BATTLE RURAL DISTRICT (EAST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 8,852. Rateable Value (1892–93), £42,583.

Letter from *F. G. Ticehurst*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

THERE has been no extra distress in the district needing special measures of any kind.

BILLESDON RURAL DISTRICT (LEICESTER).

Population (1891), 6,309. Rateable Value (1892–93), £87,337.

Letter from *W. H. Kendall*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

No exceptional distress in this district.

BLACKBURN RURAL DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 9,243. Rateable Value (1892–93), £67,056.

Letter from *R. C. Redcliffe*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress existing in this Rural District due to circumstances peculiar to the locality The rural district comprises to a very large extent agricultural land, which is almost entirely in meadow and pasture; very small portions of land which are scattered over the district, but chiefly lying on the banks of the River Ribble are under cultivation for cereals or root crops. The farms are to a large extent managed and worked by the farmer and his own family. The employment by them of men and women labourers is only practised to a limited extent, and where such labourers are employed, farmers are retaining them and giving them such employment as they can during the present severe weather. In this Rural District there has been no increase in applications to the Guardians for relief due to the severity of the weather or to the distress in trade.

2. Public authorities have not taken any steps in regard to this question, as there has been no necessity for any active agency in the Council's district, and so far as this Council is aware, no persons are exceptionally relieved beyond those who are usually assisted in every winter by voluntary agencies, these agencies being the clergy giving their usual alms, and private benevolence.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained, and it is the opinion of the Council that such an establishment is not necessary.

I have to-day called together all the members of the District Council whom I could reach. Their residences are, of course, scattered over all the district from one end to the other, and thus they are personally cognisant of the condition of the working people. I have read this reply to them, and they unanimously concur in these observations.

BRADFIELD UNION { BRADFIELD / GORING } RURAL DISTRICTS { (BERKS). / (OXFORD). }

Population (1891), { Bradfield, 15,183. / Goring, 2,834. } Rateable Value (1892–93), £136,979.

Letter from *H. G. Willink*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

IN further reply to your circular, I now forward, as I promised in my letter of 21st instant, the following documents, viz. :—

1. Letter from Relieving Officer of No. 1 District, in answer to my letter to him.

2. Letter from Relieving Officer of No. 2 District (with note by Master of Workhouse).

The statements in these documents confirm the letter I wrote to you.

(Letters before referred to).

1. I HAVE not heard of any exceptional distress further than a great many men out of work owing to severity of weather.

2. I have had no application for relief otherwise than those reported, with the exception of two medical orders this week, and have not heard of any voluntary agencies more than the soup kitchen.

3. Have not heard of any unemployed register being kept.

Number of outdoor paupers for the last six weeks: first and second week, 23; the following four weeks, 21.

E. Bunce,
Relieving Officer, No. 1 District.

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1. THERE is no exceptional distress existing, but, without question, exceptional want of employment does exist, in consequence of the prolonged frost.

2. As no distress is known to exist, there is no necessity for further agencies. The Poor Law, and private charity, are ample to meet all requirements.

3. No; such register not required.

4. No; happily, at present no need for any suggestions. During the last six weeks the total number of outdoor paupers was but 13, viz., six old people (permanent), and one man with his wife and five children (temporary), owing to illness of the man. The tramps relieved in the casual wards during the past six weeks were 18. I have been about in each of the 13 parishes in my district this week and have heard of no case of distress, so I can make this statement with great confidence.

J. Ford,
Relieving Officer, No. 2 District.

I have no additional remarks to make to the above; only add number of inmates for the past six weeks, which are 114, 114, 114, 113, 108, 109.

J. Clamp,
Master, Bradfield Workhouse.

BRECKNOCK RURAL DISTRICT (BRECKNOCK).

Population (1891), 10,130. Rateable Value (1892-93), £90,684.

Letter from *D. W. J. Thomas*, Clerk, 22nd February 1895.

1. THE only exceptional distress at present existing in this district is that which is purely attributable to the long continuance of the unusually severe weather.

2. In the Urban District relief tickets have been distributed, and soup kitchens established, by the authorities and clergy out of funds voluntarily contributed, but as the district referred to is beyond the limits of the Rural District, I am unable to give the figures as to the number relieved through those agencies.

3. No register of the unemployed has been kept in the Rural District, as the Council does not consider that the circumstances of the case call for one, or that it would be of any utility.

4. The distress existing in the Rural District is not such as to require any special action on the part of the Council.

BRIXWORTH RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 12,186. Rateable Value (1892-93), £107,573.

Letter from *W. Bury*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. IN my opinion there is no distress in the district owing to want of employment beyond what might always be expected during severe weather.

2. There is nothing being done to meet it by public authorities. Relief is given when required, so far as is possible, by voluntary agencies, understanding by that phrase personal charity. The daily number of persons relieved in this manner is not made public, and cannot therefore be stated.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. I have no suggestion to offer, but would ask to be allowed to urge that the Local Government Board would forbear to issue, at any rate to the Rural Districts, circulars on the subject of exceptional distress, such as those of 1886, 1892, 1893, and 1895, which suggest impossible schemes and ineffectual remedies, and lead to barren discussions (especially at the time of District and County Council elections), which only serve to raise expectations in the minds of the unemployed and unemployable which cannot be realised.

CALNE RURAL DISTRICT (WILTS).

Population (1891), 5,014. Rateable Value (1892-93), £41,051.

Letter from *T. M. Ferris*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress; only a few out of work.

2. Those who have applied at the Union have been found work at stone-breaking.

3. No register kept. The last few days mason and other work has been pushed forward.

CANNOCK RURAL DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 15,887. Rateable Value (1892-93), £129,580.

Letter from *J. W. Roach*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

THERE is considerable distress in this district, principally with bricklayers, brickmakers, and bricklayers' labourers; I have also to inform you that the distress is met by private charity, soup, coal, &c., being distributed in several parts of the district.

CLITHEROE RURAL DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 7,101. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *R. C. Assheton*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

I AM not aware of any exceptional distress in the district beyond such as may be accounted for by the weather. The population about here consists chiefly of mill-hands and farmers. There are, of course, a certain amount of out-door workmen, such as masons and their labourers, who are out of employment, but this they must expect from time to time during the winter months.

The enclosed cutting from the "Clitheroe Times" appeared last Friday, the 15th, so it will not quite answer your question as to the average number relieved during the week ended Saturday, 16th February, but no doubt it will answer your purpose sufficiently.

I do not know of any "unemployed register" in this district, or that one is required.

A good deal of relief is, of course, given by the Guardians as well as by private individuals, and I do not know that anything further can be done.

(Extract from "Clitheroe Times," 15th February 1895, above referred to).

CLITHEROE RELIEF FUND.

Last week the tickets issued numbered 120, with 200 soup tickets of one pint each. This week there have been 143 tickets issued, with 480 soup tickets.

The amount expended last week was 17*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.*, and this week 25*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.*, not including the cost of soup, which comes to about 5*l.* per week.

The committee are extremely careful to exclude any but deserving cases, but, owing to the insufficiency of funds, many cases which are needy and suitable for relief, but are not cases of absolute necessity, have to be passed over.

The tickets returned from the grocers show that all the allowances have been most judiciously and economically expended, and the committee hope that the tradesmen will give every assistance to the ticket-holders by pointing out the most economical purchases which can be made with the sum allowed.

By far the larger number of persons receiving assistance have families of small children.

CRICKLADE AND WOOTTON BASSETT RURAL DISTRICT (WILTS).

(Population (1891), 11,835. Rateable Value (1892-93), £88,725.

Letter from *James Sadler*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE can hardly be said to be exceptional distress in the district, although many men whose employment is casual rather than regular have, no doubt, with their families, suffered a good deal of privation owing to the severe weather.

2. The Guardians have relieved all cases which have come under their notice, but the number of applications for relief has been only slightly above the ordinary number at this season of the year. In several parishes in the Union voluntary agencies have been relieving cases of distress which were not brought under the Poor Law administration. I am unable to state the number of persons relieved by these voluntary agencies, but, stated shortly, a distribution of bread, soup, or coals to persons in distress, through the clergy or otherwise, has been made in every parish in the Union.

3. No unemployed register is maintained in any part of the district.

4. I think that the steps which have been taken as indicated above have fairly met the distress occasioned by the severe weather. This is a purely agricultural district, but owing to the backwardness of all agricultural operations, I see no reason to doubt that there will very shortly, and upon a change in the weather, be sufficient employment found for all who are willing to work. I think that any well-considered scheme by which at times like the present labour could be found by public authorities for able-bodied men thrown out of employment is well worthy of adoption; but the execution of public works, out of borrowed moneys, in such a district as this is often not practicable, and would, moreover, be interfered with by severe weather, but the establishment by highway authorities of stoneyards, at convenient points where a quantity of unbroken stone might be stored, and men employed to break it when occasion arises, would be a means of giving work to those out of employment, and at the same time avoid pauperising them. I append for your information a table comparing the numbers in the workhouse at the present time with those of the three previous years, and I also append a similar table in reference to casual paupers. As regards the number of able-bodied men in the workhouse (six), I should explain that three were admitted from the casual ward, two of whom were unable to travel owing to rheumatism, and one from a frost-bitten foot; and of the other three, one has a broken leg, another has had a finger amputated recently, and the other is the only one who states that his being in the workhouse arises from his having failed to find employment. The slight increase in the number of not able-bodied has no doubt arisen to a certain extent from the severe weather, and probably quite half-a-dozen of the 40 now in the house will take their discharge when the weather improves, and they are able by light work outside to secure a living. The very large increase in the number of casual paupers is discouraging, but I may point out that it has been gradual, and that there is nothing like so much difference between the present year and 1894 as between the latter year and the two previous ones.

(Tables above referred to).

WORKHOUSE.

1892.		1893.		1894.		1895.	
Able-bodied Men.	Not Able-bodied.	Able-bodied.	Not Able-bodied.	Able-bodied.	Not Able-bodied.	Able-bodied.	Not Able-bodied.
—	32	2	31	—	36	6	40

CASUAL PAUPERS.

First Seven Weeks of Quarter ending Lady-Day :—

—	1892.	—	1893.	—	1894.	—	1895.
Men - - -	172	Men - - -	260	Men - - -	342	Men - - -	385
Women - -	11	Women - - -	22	Women - - -	34	Women - -	21
Children - -	22	Children - -	17	Children - -	20	Children - -	15
Total - - -	205	Total - - -	299	Total - - -	396	Total - - -	421

DULVERTON RURAL DISTRICT (SOMERSET AND DEVON).

Population (1891), 4,988. Rateable Value (1892–93), £36,686.

Letter from *F. G. Ross*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this Union. The severe weather has pressed hardly on some poor people.

2. In the parish of Huish Champflower food and aids to combat the severe weather have been distributed by a voluntary committee. In Dulverton it was found that some men were prevented from following their usual callings by the severe frost, and on the 14th instant notices were issued inviting applications for work. A voluntary committee secured work for 15 who applied, principally in clearing underwood. Nothing has been done by any public authority, and no applications have been made for relief.

3. No unemployed register exists in this district.

4. No suggestions are offered. As soon as the frost gives out there will be ample work in this district.

DURSLEY RURAL DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 12,166. Rateable Value (1892–93), £67,734.

Letter from *W. L. Browne*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is some exceptional distress in some parishes of this district (Dursley), owing to the severe weather which stops agricultural works and building.

2. The distress is principally in the towns of Dursley and Wotton-under-Edge. In Dursley the distress developed about three weeks ago, when a meeting of the richer inhabitants was held, and money collected, since which time, to the 16th instant, an average of 40 men were employed daily, and a free meal to children; on an average, 135 a day (breakfast). The men were employed first in clearing snow from the town, and latterly on mending roads. The case seems to be thoroughly dealt with. In Wotton-under-Edge the employment is mostly manufacturing, and is less dependent on weather. In the course of the last week distress has, however, come to light, and a relief fund has been started and administered by the Parish Council; the average daily number relieved being about 40, with soup, bread and coals. Arrangements for their employment are being made. In the parish of Elley there is (I am informed by the Chairman of the Parish Council) not any large amount of distress, but some men are out of work through the frost. The Parish Council obtained voluntary subscriptions, and are now employing about 11 men and boys daily in getting and breaking stone. In the agricultural parishes there is, as yet, at all events, no general distress; but occasional cases of great suffering come to light, where men are out of work, have used up their small resources, and stay in their houses starving, and will not make their condition known. When these cases have come to light they seem, so far, to have been relieved by voluntary assistance.

3. No register appears to be kept in any parish.

4. I have failed in obtaining any suggestions for the purpose of relieving distress, further than those arrangements already in existence.

On receipt of your Circular I wrote to the Relieving Officers, and communicated also with the Guardians or Chairmen of the Parish Councils, throughout the district, and have based my report on their replies. On the 15th instant the Board of Guardians added sixpence weekly to aged persons in receipt of out-door relief, and living alone during the frost.

EASINGTON RURAL DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 36,782. Rateable Value (1892–93) £133,210.

Letter from *W. J. Malcolm*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is not at the present time any exceptional distress in this district, as the collieries and limestone quarries, which are the principal industries, are all working.

2. It has not been necessary to take any special measures in this district.

3. It has never been necessary to have a register of unemployed in this district.

4. No observations as to special relief are necessary for this district.

EASINGWOLD RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 10,494. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *H. Hawking*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

No exceptional distress in the district.

EDEIRNION RURAL DISTRICT (MERIONETH AND DENBIGH).

Population (1891), 5,465. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *G. Parry*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

THERE are no exceptional cases of distress in the district. There are a few thrown out of employment owing to the severe frost. A committee has been formed at Corwen to employ them in improving the roads and walks about town. Also, soup is given to the most needy families in the town; also in the villages in the district; and it shall be carried on as long as required.

ELHAM RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 11,114. Rateable Value (1892-93), £58,520.

Letter from *R. Lonergan*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, as nearly all out of work have been employed clearing snow out of the roads that have been completely blocked ; also no register of unemployed is kept.

FARINGDON RURAL DISTRICT (BERKS AND GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 12,820. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *C. G. Edwards*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE has doubtless been a certain amount of exceptional distress in this district (which is a purely agricultural one), attributable to the late severe weather.

2. A few labourers out of work on that account appeared before the Board of Guardians, and (there being no stone yard at the workhouse) I, as chairman of the District Highway Board, obtained the consent of the waywardens to offer the men work on the roads. The only other relief has been afforded by private charity, the voluntary charitable agencies not considering the amount of distress sufficient to call for a soup kitchen, and other food distributions which on former occasions had been found necessary.

3. No unemployed register has, therefore, been maintained.

4. The subject has been brought in a formal manner, by a Guardian, to the notice of the Board of Guardians, who, in the belief that in a district such as this exceptional relief in the shape of employment can only be carried out in co-operation with the Highway Authority, have postponed the further consideration of the subject until the duties of the existing Highway Board shall have passed, at Lady Day next, into the hands of the District Council, who will then be almost identical with the Board of Guardians.

FARNHAM RURAL DISTRICT (SURREY AND SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 13,411. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. Windham*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

AS Chairman of Rural District Council, no distress has been brought, or could well be brought, under my notice. If I had been written to as Chairman of the Board of Guardians, I should have answered that in our Union, comprising as it does a large military centre like Aldershot, where large contracts for building, &c., are being carried out, giving employment to a large number of artisans, labourers, and trade of sorts, there is no doubt that the recent continuance, rather longer than usual, of severe weather, has thrown all or nearly all of those engaged as above stated out of employment for the time being. So great and general has been, however, the benevolence and charity of sympathisers with those thus in distress temporarily, that no extra burden has been thrown on the rates ; nor have there been more than a normal number of applications for relief or admission to the house.

In answer to Nos. 2 and 3, I may say that true charity does not publish an account of its almsgiving.

4. Thrift in prosperous times (say 45 weeks in the year, with, to a steady reliable man, according to his abilities, good wages) will go far to assist a temporary disability for the remainder of the year. I see schemes for work on sewage farm and such like recommended. How can they be carried out with 18 inches of frost in the ground ?

GLOSSOP DALE RURAL DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 4,381. Rateable Value (1892-93), £25,624.

Letter from *T. S. Bowden*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

THE Chairman is not aware of any exceptional distress through want of employment within the district of the above Council.

GRANTHAM RURAL DISTRICT (PARTS OF KESTEVEN).

Population (1891), 12,988. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *A. H. Malim*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

WITH the exception of the distress, owing to the severity of the weather, the Chairman is not aware of any exceptional distress in the district, in fact agricultural labour is scarce.

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD RURAL DISTRICT (HERTFORD).

Population (1891), 15,116. Rateable Value (1892-93), £77,577.

Letter from *A. H. Longman*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is no more distress than is generally prevalent at this time of the year, which has been naturally accentuated by the prolonged frost. The Relieving Officer reports that there are very few exceptional cases of destitution which have been relieved.

2. Movements have been set on foot in various parts of the district, but not by any public authority, to give employment to those who were willing and able to work, such as gravel digging, &c. No reliable means are at hand for ascertaining the amount of relief given.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. No such distress exists in this district as needs special treatment.

ISLE OF AXHOLME RURAL DISTRICT (PARTS OF LINDSEY).

Population (1891), 6,029. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *G. Newborn*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

THE distress in this district has not been exceptionally severe, and has been sufficiently met by voluntary relief during the severe weather.

There is no unemployed register maintained, and there are no means of arriving at the average daily number relieved throughout the district in any particular week, as the relief has in most instances been given by private agencies.

ISLE OF THANET RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 9,466. Rateable Value (1892-93), £82,981.

Letter from *A. Collard*, jun., Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional district in the Rural District of Thanet, although the severity of the weather has thrown a few hands out of work.

2. Soup has been distributed in several parishes, and extra relief from the Guardians has met the want.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions are required. Now the weather is breaking there is ample employment for everyone requiring work.

LEDBURY RURAL DISTRICT (HEREFORD AND WORCESTER).

Population (1891), ———. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *W. T. Lane*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

THERE are no exceptional cases of distress in my district to my knowledge. There is no unemployed register kept.

LEOMINSTER RURAL DISTRICT (HEREFORD).

Population (1891), 9,106. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *H. Gosling*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is considerable distress in the district owing to the severe weather, though not more than usual on the occurrence of a hard winter.

2. Soup and coal funds have been started in several parishes of the Union, and these and some extra relief given by the Guardians seem to meet the requirements.

3. It has not been considered necessary to maintain an unemployed register in this district.

4. The local authorities seem to be able to deal with the matter.

LEWES RURAL DISTRICT (EAST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 488. Rateable Value (1892-93), £9,093.

Letter from *C. F. Sturgeon*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, but there is, as usual, a large amount due to the depressed state of trade in general and of agriculture in particular—not to the late severe weather.

2. Soup kitchens are held twice a week in every parish, beyond which I cannot find that anything is being done by public authorities.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. Yes, to relieve the distress which has so long existed, I would suggest that the Government at once impose a moderate duty on corn and all manufactured articles imported to this country, and thereby prevent the total decay of our own industries, and stop the constant removal of our rural population into the towns, where a large proportion of them become semi-paupers.

LISKEARD RURAL DISTRICT (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 22,493. Rateable Value (1892-93), £104,522.

Letter from *E. Glencross*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

THE only distress of the kind described was brought to the notice of the Liskeard Guardians by the parish of St. Cleer. A deputation attended the Board and asked the Board to influence the Highway Board to open quarries, &c., and find work for the unemployed. The Highway Board agreed, and no further representation has been made to the Liskeard Board on the matter. We (the District Council) have requested our Clerk to write to the various Parish Councils asking them to open registers for the unemployed (giving due details). Also we have asked to be furnished with names of all persons seeking labourers. We hope by this means to bring together the employers and unemployed; the registers will now we hope be coming in. The distress in this parish is owing to the stoppage of the Phœnix mine. In addition to the above parish (St. Cleer) there are miners out of work in St. Ive and Linkinhome parishes, say 80 to 90 all told.

LLANDAFF AND DINAS POWIS RURAL DISTRICT (GLAMORGAN).

Population (1891), 18,539. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *R. Trusts*, Chairman.

THE Council are unaware of any distress within their district which is of an exceptional character.

LYMINGTON RURAL DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 9,325. Rateable Value (1892-93), £42,751.

Letter from *H. Massy*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

WHILST deploring that any distress should have occurred, I am glad to be able to state that the district comprised within this Union is comparatively free from it in an acute form. This is due mainly to the great kindness of farmers and other employers of labour, who in very many instances have kept the whole of their men on throughout the prolonged frost; also to the large number of resident gentry of independent means scattered throughout the whole of the district, and who take a pleasure and a pride in assisting their poorer brethren throughout every winter. The distress, as might be expected, was most felt in Lymington and the immediate neighbourhood, from the number of bricklayers and others, who could not carry on their work during frost, being out of work. This I, believe, has been dealt with officially by the Town Council, and the Mayor and other ladies and gentlemen have by raising private subscriptions done much to alleviate the distress. At Pennington, where many men working in Lymington reside, the matter has been promptly and energetically taken up by Mr. Neal and others, who have raised subscriptions. At Sway, owing to the large number of men residing there who have no regular employment, but in fair weather earn large wages by jobbing and hiring out a horse and cart, &c., the pinch has been severe, but it has been ably dealt with by Mr. Herbert Moses, Mr. Hagar, Mr. William Pardy, and others who have raised funds, and distributed bread, coal, &c. In this parish of Hordle I have found the usual winter assistance given by the gentry amply sufficient to meet all ends, without any special efforts. The regular men employed by the Highway Board have been kept in work the whole time. All urgent cases of sickness and want, amongst those who, while not able-bodied, are able to earn a livelihood in ordinary times, have been promptly and efficiently cared for by the Board of Guardians, by placing them on a more liberal scale of relief than usual. In conclusion, I believe that the measures that have been already adopted in this district are amply sufficient to cope with the distress.

MACCLESFIELD RURAL DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 17,329. Rateable Value (1892-93), £163,868.

Letter from *J. F. May*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district beyond what is inseparable from the severe weather.

MADELEY RURAL DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 415. Rateable Value (1892-93), £4,904.

Letter from *J. A. Austin*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

THE number of men out of work in these parts is comparatively small, and is caused almost entirely by the severe weather. It is dealt with by private charity, soup-kitchens, and so on, and there is no perceptible increase in the number of applications to the Board of Guardians.

WISBECH UNION {MARSHLAND / WISBECH} RURAL DISTRICTS {(NORFOLK), / (ISLE OF ELY).}

Population (1891) {Marshland, 11,499. / Wisbech, 8,554.} Rateable Value (1892-93), £166,722.

Letter from *G. Carrick*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE was, until a few days ago, considerable distress in the district, due to the severe weather.

2. Steps were taken by the Town Council of Wisbech to provide work for the men in the town who were out of work; but I am unable to give any statistics as to the number relieved. A public meeting was convened by the Mayor on the 14th instant, and a subscription list was started for the purpose of providing bread, soup, and coals to the poor people. About 200*l.* was raised, and distributions of soup, bread, and coals have been daily made since.

3. No unemployed register is kept by any authority in the district, to my knowledge.

4. The Council have no suggestion to make. Now that the frost has shown signs of breaking up, there will very shortly be sufficient out-door work to employ all the men who have, owing to the recent severe weather, been out of employ.

The foregoing replies also apply to the district of the Wisbech Rural District Council, of which I am Clerk.

MERE RURAL DISTRICT (WILTS, SOMERSET, AND DORSET).

Population (1891), 6,756. Rateable Value (1892-93), £39,856.

Letter from *H. Baker*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, and what relief has been given has been of a voluntary character.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

MIDHURST RURAL DISTRICT (WEST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 14,236. Rateable Value (1892-93), £70,209.

Letter from *E. Albery*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE does not appear to be any exceptional distress in the district except, but to no great extent, a want of employment owing to the severe weather.

2. Nothing has been done by the public authorities, but there have been distributions of money, coals, and food, from private sources.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

MONMOUTH RURAL DISTRICT (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 6,935. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *S. Bosanquet*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, although the protracted frost has put a stop to agricultural work for a somewhat longer period than in ordinary years.

2. No extraordinary measures for relief have therefore been found necessary.

3 and 4. Under these circumstances, no register of the unemployed has been kept, and I have no suggestions to make. I may state that the whole of this district is purely agricultural.

NEWHAVEN RURAL DISTRICT (EAST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 4,139. Rateable Value (1892–93), £29,006.

Letter from *W. Gates*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district of this Council.

NEW RADNOR RURAL DISTRICT (RADNOR).

Population (1891), 3,237. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *T. Duggan*, Chairman, 21st February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district owing to the severe weather, and this circumstance is due to the fact that the district is almost wholly agricultural, and the labourers and mechanics are chiefly employed under yearly engagements.

NORTHLEACH RURAL DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 8,885. Rateable Value (1892–93), £47,804.

Letter from *Earl of Eldon*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

THERE does not appear to be exceptional distress in the Northleach district; unemployed register not required.

The agricultural depression, which is severely felt in the district, has caused many of the younger men to drift away into the large towns, and now the supply of agricultural labour is not greater than the present requirements of the district demand.

NORTHWICH RURAL DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 21,218. Rateable Value (1892–93), £201,338.

Letter from *A. Fletcher*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1 and 2. THERE cannot be said to be any exceptional distress in this district. At Moulton (population 1,143) there is a little distress owing to depression in the salt trade, but it is not more than is usual in times of depression. A relief committee (voluntary) has given away about 50*l.* in food during the last six weeks, and the Salt Union has distributed a quantity of coal. At Marston, Wineham, and Barnton, through which the Trent and Mersey Canal passes, there has been some distress amongst the canal boatmen owing to the weather; but on inquiry I find that this has been met either by local benevolence, or by grants in advance from the employers. No record seems to have been kept anywhere of the number of persons relieved.

3. There are no unemployed registers kept in the district.

4. I believe that this district is exceptionally free from distress, although there is undoubtedly a full supply of labour, and if any more persons were introduced to the district, no work could be found for them.

OGWEN RURAL DISTRICT (CARNARVON).

Population (1891), 7,226. Rateable Value 1892–93, £———.

Letter from *T. Roberts*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

No exceptional distress exists within the area of the District Council of Ogwen. Being intimately acquainted with the greater portion of the district, and from information gathered as to the condition of the other portions, provision is made by which relief is provided for the few cases requiring help by charitable persons in each neighbourhood, and now the weather has become much milder, no anxiety need be felt, but that every deserving case that may still linger on will be fully met by private charity throughout this district.

PONTYPOOL RURAL DISTRICT (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 4,456. Rateable Value (1892–93), £42,895.

Letter from *E. Williams*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THIS district is principally agricultural; there are few cases of exceptional distress existing.

2. What exceptional distress exists is met by the Guardians and voluntary aid.

3. There is no register for the unemployed kept, one not being required, as labourers are more or less scarce.

4. Having no answer to this question, permit me to suggest that the Government should at once make strenuous efforts to relieve the distressed agriculturists.

PONTYPRIDD RURAL DISTRICT (GLAMORGAN).

Population (1891),———. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *G. L. Clark*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is no amount of exceptional distress. The severe weather has undoubtedly thrown a large number of men in particular trades out of work, but probably owing to the regular employment given in our numerous collieries, railways, &c., and to increased habits of thrift, the distress here does not seem to have been as severe as in less fortunate districts.

2. Soup kitchens have been opened in the town of Pontypridd; but they are certainly not necessary as yet in this district.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

The general accuracy of these statements is borne out by the fact that there has been no exceptional demand for relief at the Union. I happen to be Chairman of the Pontypridd Board of Guardians, and at our meeting on the 20th instant I consulted our Chairman of relief committees, and also our Relieving Officers, who all agreed that this was so. With a view of providing against want of employment in this district, the Sanitary Authority, now the District Council, applied more than twelve months ago for power to construct waterworks for Llantrissant and Ton-yr-efail, but though two Inspectors have been here, our Council is still unable to obtain the necessary powers to commence the work.

RHAYADER RURAL DISTRICT (RADNOR AND BRECKNOCK).

Population (1891), 5,637. Rateable Value (1892–93) £28,202.

Letter from *R. L. Lloyd*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

THERE was no exceptional distress reported in the district at the last meeting of the Board. There were some two or three new applications for relief from working men with large families, but chiefly owing to illness. The next meeting of the Board will be held on Wednesday next, when I will lay the Circular before the members. The district is almost entirely agricultural, but we have now a considerable body of men in the district employed on the works of the Birmingham Corporation. They were all at work last week, and the engineer told me in a chance conversation that they had work for them for some days more. Of course they will be at full work again the moment the weather changes.

ST. THOMAS RURAL DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 33,541. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Champion*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, not due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, but to the severe weather.

2. A great deal has been and is being done to meet this distress by voluntary agencies, committees having been formed in many parishes to solicit and distribute contributions from private sources, and their efforts have been very successful. The District Council have no means of ascertaining the number relieved, but there is no great pressure upon the Guardians for relief.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. The District Council consider that the exceptional distress will cease with the severe weather.

SAMFORD RURAL DISTRICT (EAST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 11,995. Rateable Value (1892–93), £ 74,603.

Letter from *J. H. Hocking*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, and consequently it has not been necessary for the public authorities to make any plans or suggestions in the matter.

STAINES RURAL DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 17,733. Rateable Value (1892–93), £ ———.

Letter from *J. A. Engall*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

THE distress in the riparian parishes of this Union arose chiefly from the floods in November last, and that has been accentuated by the recent severe weather. The consequent distress has been fully met by local efforts. The Guardians of this Union have opened a wood-shed for the benefit of the unemployed, and as many as 70 have been at work in one day, and they receive 1*s.* 6*d.* and 8ozs. of bread and 2ozs. of cheese, the task of work being wood-chopping and tying 200 bundles.

STOKE-UPON-TRENT RURAL DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 5,122. Rateable Value (1892–93), £ 25,881.

Letter from *C. Daniel*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

DISTRESS of an exceptional character appears to prevail at the present time in the Bucknall portion of the Rural District only, the remaining portions, consisting of the townships of Bagnall, Botteslow, Clayton, and Seabridge, being comparatively free from conditions other than those usual at this period of the year. At Bucknall, however, the coal-miners and out-door labourers have suffered considerably, owing partly to circumstances peculiar to the locality, partly to the sorely-depressed state of trade, and generally to the exceptional severity and continuance of frost. In this district one colliery has unfortunately been closed for some time past, on account of differences which are said to have arisen between the lessees and their landlords, and at another there has been a temporary stoppage of work, whilst a different system of haulage, involving extensive under-ground alterations, has been carried out. The latter colliery gave employment to about 220 men and boys, most of whom were thrown out of work, whilst those who remained were only partially employed. The alterations are now being completed, and the men are gradually returning to work, about 40 of them having already done so. The distress from which the colliers have suffered has been met in a great measure by payments from their own society funds, in the case of those entitled to receive such payments, supplemented by relief in kind, from funds provided by voluntary contributions; whilst the non-union men have been mainly helped by the latter fund and private charitable sources. By these means from 200 to 250 men have been relieved weekly. The Rural District Council have not been in a position to start relief works, although they have in prospect the carrying out of a sewerage scheme for this portion of the Rural District; the proposal, however, is not sufficiently advanced to enable them to commence operations.

No register of the unemployed has been kept in respect of the district, but the subject is one which the Council will be willing to consider, with the view, if thought desirable, to such a register being provided.

The arrangements made for affording relief, together with the assistance to be obtained from the Guardians in cases requiring it, appear to be equal to the present emergency, and having regard to the probable return to work of most of the colliers in a short time, and the prospect of more favourable weather for out-door employment, it may not be found requisite to resort to other means of relief than those already provided.

TONBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 18,494. Rateable Value (1892–93), £ ———.

Letter from *F. W. Stone*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE are a considerable number out of work through the frosty weather, but no great amount of distress, and as soon as the frost really goes there will be employment for nearly all.

2. The Guardians are giving special relief to able-bodied by giving them work on the workhouse grounds at 1*s.* a day, but this did not begin until Monday last, the 18th instant. Several men in the districts here have been employed sweeping ice, and there are soup kitchens in most parishes.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

TORRINGTON RURAL DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 10,207. Rateable Value (1892-93), £54,590.

Letter from *J. Norman*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

THERE is not any exceptional distress in this district from want of employment. This is solely an agricultural district, and labourers are fully employed, except a few old people who have not been able to work during the severe frost.

TRURO RURAL DISTRICT (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 22,608. Rateable Value (1892-93), £100,624.

Letter from *J. Hendy*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. IN four parishes only of the Truro Union does there exist, so far as I am informed, any exceptional distress, viz., in the parishes of St. Agnes, Perranzabuloe, Kennzu, and Kea, in a great measure occasioned by the adventurers in several of the mines in these parishes having found it necessary to discontinue working them, and undoubtedly the severe weather greatly tends to increase the distress.

2. The balance of a County Miners' Distress Fund, subscribed some time since, is being utilised in the various districts to alleviate the distress as far as possible, and voluntary aid is being given as well to a considerable extent; but still more is needed. I am unable to give the numbers relieved, as the cases are scattered over a considerable area.

3. I am not aware that any general register is kept, but no doubt each parish has a list of cases.

4. I cannot see how more than is being done by private individuals can be expected, having regard to the extremely depressed condition of agriculture, mining, and other industries in this County at the present time. Should your Honourable Board feel disposed to kindly make suggestions as to the best mode of dealing with the distress, I am sure they will receive every attention.

WALSALL RURAL DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 9,319. Rateable Value (1892-93), £42,087.

Letter from *F. H. Yates*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is a good deal of distress in this district, but, in my opinion, it is mainly attributable to the very severe weather.

2. The Rural District Council have not thought it necessary to take any steps to deal with such distress, but a good deal is being done by private individuals. I am unable to furnish you with the figures which you ask for.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. I have no suggestions to make on the matter.

WELLINGTON RURAL DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 10,174. Rateable Value (1892-93), £82,045.

Letter from *W. S. Price*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

SO far as the Chairman is aware, there is no exceptional distress, arising from want of employment, in this district. Men employed on farms have been more or less engaged in feeding stock during the long frost, and in the larger villages and towns private organisations have been formed for relieving distress, and have been found adequate for the purpose. Until the frost set in, work was abundant in the district for all classes, and as it has now apparently given out, there does not appear to be any necessity for any special measures being taken.

WELWYN RURAL DISTRICT (HERTFORD).

Population (1891), 2,346. Rateable Value (1892-93), £23,504.

Letter from *R. M. Blake*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

THIS district is a very small and purely agricultural one. There is no exceptional distress in the district.

WEST DERBY RURAL DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 5,803. Rateable Value (1892-93), £66,516.

Letter from *J. Birch*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

THE nature of the district is such, being chiefly agricultural, that (1) there is no exceptional distress, excepting such as is due to the exceptional severity of the weather, which is now, however, relaxing.

2. Any such distress is met by voluntary agencies, but the number of cases relieved is so insignificant as not to be worth reporting.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. No difficulty has arisen, and therefore no suggestions are offered.

The following statement, showing the acreage, population, and pauperism bears out the foregoing statement as to the character of the district :—

	Acreage.	Population.	Number of Paupers. In-door.	Out-door.
Aintree	840	263	1	5
Croxteth Park	959	76	—	—
Fazakerley	1,709	1,251	2	3
Ince Blundell	2,132	471	1	9
Kirkby	3,664	1,419	3	16
Lunt	472	83	—	1
Netherton	1,155	551	1	6
Orrell and Ford	727	1,066	3	1
Sefton	1,203	398	—	1
Thornton	736	225	—	1
Total	13,597	5,803	11	43

Wheatenhurst Rural District (Gloucester).

Population (1891), 6,853. Rateable Value (1892–93), £56,224.

Letter from *G. E. L. Baker*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

Our Board of Guardians has had only a few applications (five or six) that could be said to be cases of exceptional distress on account of the weather. These are all in the neighbourhood of the Severn or the canal. It is not likely that any of these men would accept any work, except that to which they are accustomed, even if the number was sufficient to justify the undertaking special work. The Boards of Guardians have granted relief in kind, not in money, to the children; and the Relieving Officer is permitted to supply what is absolutely necessary.

Whiston Rural District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 19,110. Rateable Value (1892–93), £161,280.

Letter from *A. F. Mann*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. Distress of an exceptional character undoubtedly exists in this district, notably in the Township of Ditton and the Ditton end of the Township of Halewood, due to the depression in the chemical and copper trades, a large number of resident workmen being thrown out of employment in consequence of such depression.

2. Distress funds have been established by voluntary agencies, but there is no information to hand enabling me to give particulars of the numbers relieved thereby.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. The Chairman of the Council is unable to suggest any way of relieving the distress other than by voluntary agencies of a charitable nature.

Whitchurch Rural District (Southampton).

Population (1891), 5,655. Rateable Value (1892–93), £43,794.

Letter from *W. Portal*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this district, due to want of employment, aggravated by the severe weather.

2. The Board of Guardians have given relief in destitute cases. Voluntary agencies have supplied coal, bread, soup, groceries, &c. Employment has been found for a limited number, in the nature of relief work, widening roads, &c. I am not able to give the daily number relieved.

3. No register of unemployed is kept.

4. Minimise the distress by giving greater encouragement to temperance and thrift.

WINSLOW RURAL DISTRICT (BUCKINGHAM).

Population (1891), 7,701. Assessable Value (1892–93), £51,761.

Letter from *T. Biggs*, Chairman, 20th February 1895.

I AM not aware of any special circumstances, or exceptional distress, other than what each parish in this district, and the Board of Guardians at their ordinary meetings, are able to deal with. Nevertheless, taking note of your Circular as "urgent," I will immediately consult the Vice-Chairman and Clerk of this Council and Board as to the advisability of calling a special meeting of the Council to discuss and enquire into the subject.

WOLSTANTON RURAL DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 32,387. Rateable Value (1892-93), £106,261.

Letter from *J. A. Lowndes*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

THERE has been distress in this district caused by the severe weather, but not more than in the past under similar conditions; the applications up to the present have not necessitated the Council taking special steps, as it has been met by private charity.

WOODBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT (EAST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 15,563. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *W. Phillips*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

1. THERE is distress in parts of this district due to the severe weather, but partly in consequence of the difficulties in which the agricultural community is at present placed through the great decline in prices of agricultural produce.

2. The distress is met by parochial relief and voluntary agencies. I have no means of ascertaining the daily number relieved.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. I have no new suggestion to make for relieving the distress.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

ST. GEORGE, HANOVER SQUARE, PARISH.

Population, 78,364. Rateable Value (1892-93), £1,841,952.

Letter from *J. H. Smith*, Vestry Clerk, 25th February 1895.

YOUR Circular Letter of the 19th instant was read to the Vestry at their meeting on Thursday last (21st), and by them referred to a Committee of Vestry then appointed to meet a Committee of the Guardians of St. George's Union on the question of finding work for the distressed unemployed.

In the outset, I may say that my Committee fully endorse the opinion of Sir Hugh Owen given in evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons on the unemployed as reported in the "Times" newspaper of the 22nd instant as follows:—"I also think that when the local authorities are expending the rates for the purpose of works it is their duty to their constituents to carry out only works that are necessary." This parish is one in which the streets for some years have been wholly formed and duly sewered and drained. The Vestry maintain a large permanent staff of workmen in cleansing, repairing, watering, and lighting, &c. the streets under their care. None of these workmen are thrown out of work in times of frost. The possibility of adding to necessary works is, therefore, of a very limited and of a yearly decreasing character. There is an old burial ground of the parish in the Uxbridge-road which the Vestry have been putting into decent order. A vote of 500*l.* for work in this ground was expended in December last, and under ordinary circumstances the men then employed would have been discharged, and the work suspended until a further vote on the next rate had effect; but solely in view of the undesirableness of throwing the men out of employment in the winter season, the Vestry on the 20th December last voted a further sum of 500*l.* to be expended on the work, and ordered that the Surveyor should continue the employment of the men without waiting for the new year, which commences on the 25th March next. In addition to this outlay, owing to the recent falls of snow, the Surveyor has expended in casual labour a sum of between 500*l.* and 600*l.* There has undoubtedly, the Committee think, been exceptional distress in the parish, but this is a parish (although there are many poor and struggling ratepayers in it) where such distress would not be so acutely felt as in many other of the Metropolitan parishes. What has been done by the Vestry to meet the distress has been above stated. The Committee are unable to speak on behalf of voluntary agencies, none of which are associated with the Vestry. I am to assure the Local Government Board that the Committee deeply sympathise with persons suffering from the prevailing distress. The powers of the Vestry for executing work are limited by Statute. The Committee feel that the Vestry have done all that can legally and fairly be expected of them. The Committee believe it to be undesirable to employ labour on useless work; they consider charity and poor relief to be better than this, and they regret that it is not in the power of the Vestry to do more than has been done.

Finally, I am to say that no unemployed register has been kept by the Vestry. There is a feeling that such a register without the power of employment is likely to irritate, and from its disappointments to prove more harmful than otherwise; but the matter will be further considered by the Committee of Vestry.

ST. JAMES, WESTMINSTER PARISH.

Population (1891), 24,995. Rateable Value (1892-93), £751,255.

Letter from *T. H. Munsey*, Vestry Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THE Vestry, as the local authority of the parish, are not aware of any exceptional distress in the district beyond that caused by the extreme inclemency of the weather. It is believed, however, that there has been a considerable falling off in the tailoring trade in the neighbourhood, and that this, combined with the severe weather, has caused more distress than usual in the parish, as a large number of foreign and other tailors are resident in that portion of the parish adjoining Soho.

2. The only way open to the Vestry of relieving distress has been by employing extra labour in the removal of snow and clearing the streets. The men engaged were not merely parishioners, but were also taken from the surrounding parishes. Owing to the peculiar situation of the parish it will be readily understood that the Vestry are unable to start relief works for the purpose of meeting distress. The Clerk to the Guardians of the Westminster Union states that the number of out-door poor relieved in St. James's for the week ended Saturday, 16th February, was 70 only, as against 82 for the corresponding week of last year. With a view to ascertain what is being done by voluntary agencies to meet the distress I have addressed communications to the managers of the Ham Yard Soup Kitchen and the Soho and St. Giles Mission, and for the information of the Board enclose herewith a copy of their replies. It will be seen from these replies that every effort has been made to deal with the distress, and I am not aware that any case of exceptional starvation has occurred in the district.

3. An unemployed register is kept at the Vestry Hall each winter, and persons out of work in the parish are invited to enter their names. The register was opened on the 1st October last, and up to the present time 71 persons have entered their names. Of this number 14 have been found on inquiry to be not known or to be unsatisfactory. I am not aware that any of these unemployed have obtained permanent employment through being on the register, but they have from time to time been engaged temporarily in snow removal when extra labour was required by the Vestry.

4. The Vestry have no suggestions to offer for relieving distress in the parish, as they believe that everything that can be done is being done in that direction. It may be mentioned that there are a number of charities (ecclesiastical and non-ecclesiastical) in which poor parishioners participate, and it is estimated that from these charities a sum of something like 1,000*l.* per annum is paid away in money and kind to the poor of the parish.

(Letters above referred to).

Soho and St. Giles Mission, Bloomsbury Hall, Soho, W.,
23 February 1895.

THE distress in the St. James's Parish this winter is exceptional. This arises from the bad season in the tailoring trade, and the long and severe frost which has accompanied it. The families of the tailors and seamstresses have suffered severely, and so have also those of painters, porters, odd-men, and labourers generally. We supplied daily 200 families with soup and bread, and also about 100 weekly with coal, as well as a weekly hot Irish stew dinner to 400 poor children, chiefly in the Soho and St. James districts. I think, however, that the absolute needs of the parish can be met by voluntary agencies, especially if they be backed up by efficient pecuniary support during such seasons of exceptional severity as the one through which we have just passed.

(signed) *William Harrison.*

Ham Yard Soup Kitchen and Hospital, Piccadilly-circus, W.,
23 February 1895.

STATISTICS of RELIEF given by this Charity during the Week ended the 16th February 1895.

Ham Yard Soup Kitchen, &c.	Free Meals to Families registered during Week.	Penny Dinners for Week.	Total, Week ended 16th February.	Daily Average for Week ended 16th February.
On register 16th February, 766 families, about 200 above record	10,663	1,260	11,923	1,987
Corresponding week, 1894	5,945	1,536	7,481	1,247
Ditto ditto, 1893	5,431	1,494	6,925	1,154

	Free Meals.
The three weeks ended to-day, 23rd February 1895, were registered	30,000
Whilst during the whole month of February 1894 the number was	24,000
And in the whole month of February 1893	22,000

Coal tickets (½ cwts.) were issued between October and April last year to the number of 7,663, being 20 tons in excess of any previous year since 1873. This year, from October till to-day, 23rd February 1895, 11,689 tickets have been issued; this is about 100 tons more than last year; 3,000 were issued the week ended 16th February 1895.

I may

I may mention that our relief, which is not confined to this parish, but to all parishes in the surrounding district is given on the recommendation of subscribers, who fill in their special forms for the purpose, or by the clergy and missions in such parishes. All cases are registered and indexed daily to prevent overlapping. Each family is relieved on alternate days, receiving 2 quarts of soup and 2 lbs. of bread. Thus we have practically two sets of people on alternate days. The recent extremely cold weather is, doubtless, the cause of much of the exceptional distress, which is proved by the fact that since such severity has abated so gradually has the demand for exceptional relief. Want of work is a great factor in the matter, as we got a very large proportion of widows, tailors, tailoresses, and the like on our books. Personally, I feel grateful for the noble extraneous efforts which have been made by the Press and other agencies to meet the distress, as but for their aid the houseless and nomadic poor would otherwise have quite overtaxed our means of providing food for them, save at the expense of the poor families, to whom, I consider, our first duty is of paramount importance.

(signed) *W. Stevens*,
Secretary.

St. Luke, Middlesex Parish.

Population (1891), 42,440. Rateable Value (1892–93), £325,649.

Letter from *E. Howes*, Chairman of Vestry, 25th February 1895.

1. Unfortunately there is exceptional distress in this parish owing to the severe weather, but, as far as I am able to ascertain, happily not to any serious extent.

2. I am unable to speak as to what is being done by voluntary agencies and the number of persons relieved, but so far as the Vestry is concerned, many men have been taken on for street cleansing purposes, and some amount of employment over that usually available has been provided in consequence.

3. No register of the unemployed has yet been started in the parish.

4. It would be difficult to make any suggestions for the purpose of relieving distress arising from want of employment peculiarly applicable to this parish further than that mentioned as having been already adopted by the Vestry; but it seems to me that amongst suggestions which have been put forward one entitled to careful consideration is that of afforestation of waste lands near London. The work pertaining thereto could not only, I think, be carried out under suitable surroundings, but sooner or later a considerable revenue would be produced.

St. Mary, Newington Parish.

Population (1891), 115,804. Rateable Value (1892–93), £474,175.

Letter from *Rev. J. W. Horsley*, Chairman of Vestry, 25th February 1895.

I cannot answer officially your questions (1) and (4), inasmuch as to do so would require a special meeting of the Vestry, and more delay than would meet your wishes. I may say, however, that exceptional distress in this parish has undoubtedly been more due to exceptional weather than to any circumstances peculiar to the locality. We started a register of unemployed at the Vestry Hall on 2nd January, but early in February had to issue a notice that more names had been received than could be regularly employed, and, that therefore, it was of little use for fresh names to be sent in. Up to now 423 names have been enrolled, and the daily average of men employed during the week ended 16th February was 66. They have received 6*d.* per hour, and the cost from 2nd January to 20th February has been 508*l.* The circumstances of this parish make it very difficult to find work of a temporary character. The work given has been the sweeping of the streets, especially of the back streets. Early in the year a joint committee of the Vestry and the Guardians and the Board of Works in Southwark was formed to consider the question of how to meet exceptional distress, and one result has been the adoption by our Vestry last night of the following resolutions:—

(*a*) That all men provided with temporary employment be paid the wage now paid to the workmen of the Vestry on the particular work upon which they may be engaged. (*b*) That in the opinion of the Vestry the Guardians having the machinery at hand through their staff, are best able to distinguish the suitable from the unsuitable applicants, and that the Vestry will accept the result of the Guardians' investigation in finding work for the unemployed. (*c*) That upon the Guardians forwarding to the Vestry a list of suitable applicants for employment, being residents of the parish, the Vestry will, as far as possible, employ men if suitable work can be found. (*d*) That preference be given to married men with families. (*e*) That it be a condition that there shall have been a six months' residence in the parish. (*f*) That there be an interchange between the Guardians and the Vestries or Boards of Works of the names and addresses of those to whom employment has been given.

The Vestry also determined to re-make a considerable street (Beresford-street) in order to increase the number of those we could set to work. But the autocratic and obstructive frost has rendered it impossible even to begin this work, and also has reduced to a minimum the amount of cleansing necessary in the streets. Therefore the same cause has produced both greater need and greater inability to meet that need. The Guardians of the Poor have been employing as many as possible who are fathers of families, giving them one, two, or three days' work, according to the number of their families, and I find that 122 men were so employed by the Newington Guardians in the week ended 16th February. The number of those in receipt of ordinary out-door relief during the same week was 2,153 as compared with 1,244 in the corresponding week of 1894.

With regard to voluntary agencies there has been, I believe, little beyond the ordinary activity of religious and philanthropic agencies; but I may state that I formed in my parish (St. Peter's, Walworth) a depôt of the National Food Supply Association, and that we have been distributing to school children and others, up to 1,800 halfpenny dinners for four days each week. This we began to do in November, and the demand has steadily increased up to our present figures, which represent the limits of our powers.

I would venture to suggest that a Circular from the Local Government Board issued at the end of October, reminding local bodies of the desirability of anticipating the period of distress by the adoption of rules and conditions governing the relief or work given, would be valuable. Then method and providence would hinder much of the inconvenience that necessarily is felt when measures have suddenly to be devised or adopted in the face of an unexpected stress of weather.

II.—COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Birmingham County Borough.

Population (1891), 478,113. Rateable Value (1892-93), £2,040,808.

Letter from *T. S. Fallows*, Mayor, 25th February 1895.

On receipt of your Circular Letter of the 19th instant, I immediately caused printed copies of the questions submitted to me to be forwarded to the permanent relief organizations in this city, and to the more important of those organizations which have been called into existence to meet the recent emergency. I enclose detailed answers to the four questions from 21 of such organizations, and it does not appear to me that I can profitably make any comment upon the information so supplied.

(Answers above referred to).

The Charity Organisation Society.

1. There is a very exceptional amount of distress in this city, due to the severity of the weather; and more than a usual amount of distress in consequence of depression in local industries.

2. This society for the week ended 16th February 1895, relieved about 2,400 cases per day with tea, sugar, rice, oatmeal, &c., the cost being supplied by voluntary contributions.

3. A register is kept of every case relieved, but we do not keep in the ordinary way a register of the unemployed.

4. We have no suggestion other than that which is now in operation for the purpose of relieving the distress, which, being of a temporary character, has to be dealt with in an exceptional manner.

Church Army Labour Home.

1. There is exceptional distress. We have our home constantly full of unemployed, the exceptional distress mostly by severity of weather, following a period of depression of trade.

2. Church Army Labour Home Day and Night Shelter: average, 45 a night. Free dinners, 150 men; also temporary employment. Soup kitchen, 360 gallons for the week; also about 100 cases relieved by tickets for coal and groceries in the parish from another fund; 1,100 lbs. of bread for the week.

3. We have in our labour home generally 24 men, who earn enough to pay for board, lodging, clothing, and 3s. per week; after remaining four months under Christian discipline they are helped to obtain situations.

4. We believe the Church Army system a most excellent one for relieving those who are in poverty or who have fallen into bad habits.

Lately trade has been in a most depressed state, a great many only working half-time.

North Birmingham Relief Fund.

1. The bulk of the distress in this district is due to the exceptionally severe weather, which has thrown nearly all the out-door workers (slaters, bricklayers, labourers, &c.) temporarily out of employ.

2. The number of families who received relief in food (bread, soup, groceries, &c.) during the week ended 16th instant would be about 1,100 of 5,000 persons, of which 750 households were helped by the North Birmingham Relief Fund, and 350 by the various religious and philanthropic agencies in the locality.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

The North Birmingham District (St. George's, St. Stephen's, and St. Mary's Wards) comprises about 12,000 householders, of these 120, or one per cent., are in permanent receipt of parish relief, and 1,100 householders, or nine per cent., have been helped during the present distress by voluntary funds; about 200 will represent the permanent out-of-work cases in the district.

Central Birmingham Mutual Aid Society.

1. There is very considerable exceptional distress, chiefly owing to the severe weather.

2. The average daily number relieved, 30.

Police-aided Association for Clothing Destitute Children.

1. There is certainly exceptional distress in this district, owing chiefly to the severe weather.

2. Average daily number relieved by this association during week ended 16th February, 62.

Hurst Street Domestic Mission.

1. There is certainly exceptional distress in this district, due mainly to the severe weather.

2. Average daily number relieved by this mission during the week ended Saturday, 16th February 1895.

Birmingham Medical Mission.

1. There is exceptional distress at this time in the parish of St. Gabriel's, Birmingham, the district allotted to the Medical Mission for giving relief. It is caused by the prolonged frost, but there are very many on very short time in the factories. Being one of the poorest districts, the day labourer forms a large proportion of the population.

2. A relief

2. A relief committee was formed in the St. Bartholomew's Ward on Tuesday, 12th February, to grapple with the prevailing distress, and in the portion referred to above we have visited, and up to the 16th the average number of needy families helped was about 225 daily.

3. There has not been an unemployed register kept, but all the cases relieved have been noted, and such a register could be made up therefrom.

4. If a committee could be maintained for the purpose of looking into cases as they arise, all the year round, it would secure the detection of fraud and relieve the need as it appeared. Unemployed could be set to work as such was found.

West Birmingham Relief Fund.

1. The West Birmingham Relief Fund is of opinion that there is exceptional distress in the Western Division of Birmingham, and that it is due (*a*) mainly to the severe weather; (*b*) in a much less degree to general depression of trade.

2. The West Birmingham Relief Fund received applications from about 350 to 360 cases (families) during the week ended 16th February 1895. The average relieved per day was 50.

3. No unemployed register kept. We endeavour to find work when there seems to be a possibility of our succeeding, and when we are in a position to give assurance that the applicant has the necessary qualifications, and that his other character is satisfactory.

4. We are of opinion that the Poor Law Guardians should have the power to make grants to organisations like our own, so that adequate relief, not leaving the taint of pauperism, might be distributed at times of exceptional distress.

Birmingham Schools Cheap (or, more accurately, Free) Dinners Committee.

1. Birmingham is seldom without suffering in some of its extraordinary variety of industries, some of which are of little help to each other. Speaking generally, I think employment is suffering more from irregularity than absolute suspension. There is, consequently, less ability to withstand such strains as prolonged frost.

2. Much in every required direction, chiefly through the agency of local permanent or temporary channels of relief of a voluntary nature. 4,500 free dinners (daily on school days) to poor children selected by school officials in elementary schools.

3. Nothing comprehensive that I know of.

4. The utilisation, as in Birmingham, of local agencies capable of expansion and contraction of effort and expenditure.

Aston Manor Relief Association.

1. There is exceptional distress in this district at the present time, but, in my opinion, such exceptional distress is entirely due to the severe weather.

2. The distress is being met in this district:—1st. By this Association. 2nd. By the usual parochial agencies assisted largely by private effort. The average daily number of families relieved by the various agencies in Aston during the week ended 16th February 1895, is upwards of 1,200. In addition, 1,000 children attending the elementary schools received one free meal per day.

3. No register of unemployed is kept.

4. I have no suggestion to offer for further means of relieving distress in this district, as I am of opinion that the existing agencies meet the demand, and that with an improvement in the weather the necessity for exceptional relief will cease.

The Parish of Bishop Ryder, Birmingham.

1. There is exceptional distress. Bad trade and severe weather. In this parish there are so many who may be called casuals—men and women very low in the social scale, always very poor, and in weather like we have had the last month they suffer terribly.

2. Visiting the houses of the poor, giving tickets for grocery, coal, and soup to about 500 families, four times during the week. Cost provided by voluntary contributions.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. I think some alteration in the Poor Law is necessary.

Holliday Street Wesleyan Mission Hall.

1. A considerable amount of exceptional distress exists in this district, which is due mainly to the severity of the weather, though it is a neighbourhood in which there is always great poverty.

2. A soup kitchen was established, which relieves on an average 90 people daily.

3. No unemployed register kept.

Saltley Ward Relief Committee.

1. There is an exceptional amount of distress at the present time, a great deal of it attributable to severe weather. Many brickmakers and out-door labourers.

2. Nothing by public authorities; voluntary agencies doing all relieving. Do not know number relieved; should estimate 300 to 350 per day.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. I am afraid the distress is too widespread for any system of help by the Authorities, and voluntary agencies can only touch a portion of it. Visiting should be rigidly done, so that the efforts of the agency may reach as far as possible the really deserving.

Harborne Relief Committee.

1. There is little, if any, exceptional distress in Harborne, and what there is is caused by the severe weather alone.

2. At a public meeting held on the 11th instant, it was decided to start a relief fund. On the 12th, bread and coal was distributed to 113 applicants. On the 15th, bread, coal, groceries, and soup was supplied to 143 persons.

3. No such register is kept, as the need of it is not felt.

4. The distress in Harborne appears not to be so acute as in other parts of Birmingham, and elsewhere, and the committee have ample funds to deal with it.

Bloomsbury Institution.

1. The locality is always more or less poverty stricken. The severe weather is mostly responsible for the extreme poverty now existing.

2. Here we have provided food for all who really need, and who have applied for it; about 4,000 meals for the week mentioned. The public have found the means; we have supplied free labour.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The plan we adopt under ordinary circumstances seems to answer the purpose of picking out the loungers. We give a piece of brown bread and coffee; they will not come for that. A revival of trade which seems to have begun will work wonders.

Market Traders', &c. Soup Kitchen Committee.

1. Apart from the chronic state of poverty always to be found amongst a certain class, there is exceptional distress in Birmingham, most of which is owing to the severe weather. There is also distress caused by depression of trade.

2. Soup kitchen established at Montague-street; 1 quart of soup, and from 2 lbs. of bread given to each person served. Number served, 2,000 each day on three days of the week. Sunday, 4,200 children supplied with a meal. About 50 children, &c. clothed.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The present distress in Birmingham is apparently being met by the very numerous voluntary agencies. Local authorities should have power to establish labour works, as a kind of test-house, without pauperisation. Every district should have a properly-organised voluntary agency for the relief of distress, which would immediately necessity arises, provide relief, and would prevent overlapping of agencies, and thus the abuse of charity. Board of Guardians should have power to grant sums of money to approved voluntary agencies for relief of distress.

Floodgate Street Mission, held in the Board Schools.

1. Owing to the severe weather and bad trade, exceptional distress exists in this locality.

2. The Market Traders' Soup Kitchen, Montague-street; the Butchers' Soup Kitchen, Shambles; Medical Mission and Mission in Board Schools, and many voluntary agencies, are nobly helping to relieve the distress.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. I believe that coal and clothing are most needed at present. Many of the children are almost naked. Every house should be visited, so that no case might be overlooked.

North Birmingham Mission.

1. Severe weather and general bad trade.

2. Voluntary agencies about 200 per day.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. We think the Guardians should extend their out-door relief.

St. Matthias Church Special Distress Fund.

1. Yes, it is due largely to the severe weather. Many of the people of the parish being out-door workers.

2. A special distress fund was opened on the 11th instant, to relieve, as far as possible, the worst cases. I cannot give the exact number relieved daily, but I should say about 100. Several members of the congregation helping the poor in the parish privately. Soup kitchens have been opened; coal, grocery, meat, bread, and clothing have been given away, besides helping in paying rent and finding blankets for the sick.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

Wesleyan Sea Horse Mission.

1. There is a good deal of chronic distress. But the larger proportion is due to the severe weather, and is therefore, exceptional distress.

2. Soup kitchens are opened every day, Sunday included. Coal, bread, and grocery is given, also clothing and boots and blankets—about 500. Also labour yard is opened—about 15 men employed.

3. Unemployed register kept. About 25 per cent. of the applicants have obtained employment: that is, permanent employment.

4. (1st) That it be left in the hands of men who are known, and who also know the people. (2nd) That each organisation shall work within a certain radius. (3rd) That upon each application, name and address shall be registered, and extent of relief defined. (4th) That the men engaged in this work shall meet periodically and compare notes.

BIRMINGHAM WHOLESALE MEAT SALESMEN'S ASSOCIATION.

1. No, excepting that occasioned by the recent very severe weather.

2. The butchers' soup kitchen has distributed soup, bread, and rice to 3,000 this day.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. Change of Government.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S WARD RELIEF FUND.

1. THERE is exceptional distress. Large number of out-door workers unable to work owing to severe weather; also slackness of trade generally.

2. Poor Law Guardians giving increased out-door relief. Voluntary agencies also giving relief largely. Our average number daily, 600.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. Some relaxation of the present Poor Law regulations; Government Labour Bureau; institution of permanent relief committee, which we purpose doing.

SALFORD COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population, 198,139. Rateable Value (1892-93), £798,714.

Letter from *S. Brown*, Town Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE has, no doubt, been exceptional distress in the district, due almost entirely to the severity of the weather.

2. The Mayoress made an appeal, on the 12th instant, for subscriptions in connection with a soup kitchen it was proposed to open, to meet in some measure the prevailing distress, and that in response to this appeal, a sum of £595 has been received; and agencies for conducting soup distributions have been established at the Town Halls of Salford, Broughton, and Pendleton, as well as at the racecourse. On Friday last (22nd), the numbers returned were as follows, for that day:—Salford, 1,926, men, women, and children, who had been fed on soup, bread, bacon, or cheese; Pendleton, 1,397; Broughton, 500; and the racecourse, 750. Although these were the highest numbers registered since the commencement of the distribution, the numbers have maintained a fair average throughout. It is proposed to continue these agencies up to Saturday next, and beyond that date should the severity of the weather demand it. In addition to this there has been 400 tons of coke distributed at the rate of one hundredweight per each ticket, and 80 tons of coal in the same manner.

3. The Labour Exchange established by the Council maintain an unemployed register, the results of which, I understand, are being periodically forwarded to the Board of Trade. I may say, with reference to this matter, that your Circular* of the 11th instant was duly placed before the Labour Exchange Committee, and they passed a resolution that under the present financial condition of the borough it was impossible for them to do more than they were doing for the unemployed.

4. I am instructed to say that in consequence of the rigorous weather it has been impossible to institute out-door work for the alleviation of distress; and that the Council at this moment have no suggestions to make upon the question.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 40,463. Rateable Value (1892-93), £149,938.

Letter from *C. Gartside*, Town Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. So far as the Mayor has been able to ascertain there is no exceptional distress in this borough. There is certainly a considerable amount of distress amongst persons engaged in the building trades and in other out-door occupations; but this is entirely owing to the severe weather.

2. A soup kitchen has been opened at the Town Hall, with the sanction of the Corporation, and is supported by voluntary subscriptions, which up to the present time have been of a generous and sufficient character. The soup kitchen is open every alternate day, when soup and bread are distributed. The average number of persons relieved on each occasion is about 1,800.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained in this borough.

4. The Mayor has no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving such distress as exists, and which, he believes, will be at an end immediately the state of the weather enables the persons affected to resume their usual avocations.

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*See note * on page 87.

CAMBRIDGE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CAMBRIDGE).

Population (1891), 36,983. Rateable Value (1892-93), £210,466.

Letter from *T. H. Hills*, Mayor, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE has been some little exceptional distress, owing to the severe weather.

2. Such distress as there has been, has been satisfactorily dealt with by voluntary aid in the different parishes. It is impossible to ascertain the number relieved.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

DEVIZES MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (WILTS).

Population, 6,426. Rateable Value (1892–93), £23,799.

Letter from *G. H. Mead*, Mayor, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress, owing to the severe weather.

2. An emergency fund has been raised by public subscription to meet the needs of all those out of employment.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make. We quite believe that the change in the weather will relieve us of further anxiety in the matter.

SHAFTESBURY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DORSET).

Population (1891), 2,122. Rateable Value (1892–93), £5,400.

Letter from *J. K. Rutter*, Town Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress, but continued frost has rendered work slack.

2. At this time of the year masons and others are usually short of work, for which they provide in the summer. There is a soup kitchen open every winter, and in consequence of frost it has been opened twice a week instead of once. Soup is sold at 1*d.* per quart, and free tickets are distributed by subscribers. Coal (2 cwt. per house) has been given to those out of work and otherwise needy.

3. There is no unemployed register.

4. Sale of food at or even below cost price appears to be a good way of meeting exceptional distress.

I venture, unofficially, to offer a few suggestions for relief of distress in winter. 1. That local authorities should reserve such work as they may require to be done in the way of road-making, paths, excavating, &c., and especially levelling and embankments for light railways, until there is exceptional distress. 2. That the local authority should have competent work overseers, and pay by time or piece. 3. Rate of pay to be slightly below current rate, so as not to affect usual work or attract labour. 4. No non-parishioner to be employed; and, 5. No one to be employed unless out of work for two weeks previously.

TEWKESBURY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 5,269. Rateable Value (1892–93), £20,003.

Letter from *H. A. Badham*, Town Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is some exceptional distress in the borough, caused by the severe weather.

2. The Urban District Council have given employment at the outfall works, and about 200 quarts of soup and 200 half-quartern loaves of bread have been distributed daily by voluntary agencies since the 8th instant. I cannot give the numbers daily relieved.

3. No unemployed registers have been kept, but a committee has been sitting at the Town Hall on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays since the 11th instant to take the names of unemployed willing to work, and, as before stated, work has been found for them at the outfall works, at 2*s.* 6*d.* per day. About 30 men have been employed daily.

4. I have no suggestion to make.

WARWICK MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (WARWICK).

Population (1891), 11,903. Rateable Value (1892-93), £51,689.

Letter from *B. Campbell*, Town Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. OWING to the protracted frost there has been exceptional distress among the working classes here as in other parts of the kingdom.

2. A labour relief committee has been formed to collect funds, out of which an average number of about 70 able-bodied men have been daily employed in labour works, while the sick and weakly have been helped at home.

3. A register of unemployed was started about a year ago, but no use was made of it.

4. In a small borough of this kind it is not difficult to tide over exceptional times, and it has usually been done by raising voluntary subscriptions, and setting the competent on to some useful work.

WIDNES MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 30,011. Rateable Value (1892-93), £149,989.

Letter from *S. Sadler*, Mayor, 25th February 1895.

CONSIDERABLE exceptional distress does prevail in this borough.

Owing to the well-known depression in the alkali trade (the staple industry of the borough), the chemical works have been partially stopped (more or less) since the middle of December last, and many men have consequently been thrown out of employment. The recent severe weather has also deprived many other workmen of the opportunity of obtaining out-door labour. To meet the distress the local authority have themselves undertaken various necessary improvements which they had in hand, and by these means they have been enabled to provide a certain amount of work, such as excavating, levelling, sewering, street widening, cindering of footpaths, &c. The following is a statement showing the number of men employed and wages paid :—

Week ended	Number of Men Employed.	Amount Paid.		
		£	s.	d.
December 12 1894	23	1	17	9
„ 19 „	93	41	10	6
„ 26 „	105	42	5	9
January 2 1895	128	65	15	6
„ 9 „	133	82	10	5
„ 16 „	123	73	6	4
„ 23 „	111	79	2	1
„ 30 „	97	53	5	10
February 6 „	47	36	2	10
„ 13 „	57	40	6	0
„ 20 „	88	53	6	4
	1,005	£569	9	4

The Corporation have also on hand about £12,000 worth of private street improvements, which they propose to carry out as soon as the weather will permit. There is no special voluntary relief agency in the borough at the present time, but I should add that, during the winter of 1893-94, a fund amounting to £3,187 was publicly subscribed and administered by a committee, under the direction of the Mayor and other leading inhabitants, and that during that period some 7,000 persons were daily relieved by the distribution of food, and in other ways. At that time, however, the distress was much more acute than it is now, in consequence of the great coal strike which then existed. No unemployed register has been maintained, but proper precautions have been taken in dealing with applications for relief. I know of no means by which local authorities can assist in the relief of distress other than by the carrying out of works of improvement or reconstruction, and I take it that in this respect the authorities are limited by considerations of public necessity and desirability. From a practical point of view, however, I would suggest that if steps could be taken to facilitate the granting of sanctions by the Local Government Board to loans required for improvements in connection with which relief work can be provided some alleviation would be caused. At present great delay is occasioned, and in many instances, the local authorities have to take the risk of their works being disapproved. It would also, no doubt, be an encouragement to local authorities to undertake works of improvement not immediately pressing if the commencement of the formation of the necessary sinking funds for such work could be deferred for a reasonable period. Great circumspection has, however, to be displayed in starting works, as it is well-known that the fact of such works being in progress forms a great attraction to the unemployed in other places, who naturally gravitate to the localities where work is to be found, and consequently swell the numbers of unemployed in such places.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Barnet Urban District (Hertford).

Population (1891), 5,496. Assessable Value (1892-93), £ 22,980.

Letter from *H. W. Poole*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. There is some exceptional distress in this district, which is entirely attributable to the recent severe frost.

2. Free dinners are being dispensed three times in each week by the licensed victuallers of the district. On Tuesday, the 19th instant, dinners were given to 250 persons by the first-mentioned agency; but a large proportion of these were men from the surrounding districts and parishes, who had come in to avail themselves of the work provided by the Guardians of Barnet Union in the stone-breaking yard; and there are also three soup-kitchens opened for the supply of food to the poor within the district by different religious denominations. Extra labour has been employed upon the roads when practicable, and in other ways.

3. No register of the unemployed is maintained.

4. A circular letter has been issued and published a few days ago by a self-appointed committee of the Council, inviting general and permanent co-operation for the relief of distress, and it is considered that this, if carried out, will in the future meet all the requirements of the district, and enable the relief to be more equitably distributed.

Bicester Urban District (Oxford).

Population (1891), 3,343. Assessable Value (1892-93), £ 8,095.

Letter from *J. W. Hunt*, Chairman, 24th February 1895.

Unquestionably there has been considerable distress among the poor here, very many men having been thrown out of employment owing to the severe frost, but prompt measures have been taken. Soup has been distributed twice or three times a week, and dinners have been given to the children by benevolent persons, and a very considerable sum has been distributed. None of the work has been done by the Council (as a body), and we thought the matter was being adequately dealt with. I enclose a report from our Vicar.

No register was kept of the numbers of the unemployed.

(Report above referred to).

1. There is exceptional distress, and this is, in my opinion, due to the severity of the weather telling upon certain occupations—*e.g.* masons, painters, labourers—which are always, in some degree, dependent upon the weather.

2. Exceptional charity is meeting exceptional distress. A sum of 30*l.*, contributed in charity, has afforded 10*s.* to every father of a family out of work; kind people have made odd jobs; skaters have given a little employment to handy men; soup kitchen has relieved about 50 families on three days of the week.

3. No register of the unemployed is kept.

4. I have nothing very useful to suggest. The area of our distress is so small, and the number of the sufferers comparatively small also, that the town does not by itself present any very difficult problem. I have thought that, seeing masons and painters are the chief sufferers, a system of deferred pay (voluntarily left with the master during the season of active work) might constitute some insurance against the disaster of winter; or that, seeing carpenters can be earning full wages while their fellow-workmen—painters and masons—in the same firm are idle, a system of federated trades' unions might do something to redress the inequality.

Billinge Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 3,996. Assessable Value (1892-93), £ 11,358.

Letter from *A. Darlington*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

There is no exceptional distress in the district.

Brumby and Frodingham Urban District (Parts of Lindsey).

Population (1891), 2,140. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *G. S. Sowter*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

As the labouring class in the district of this Urban District Council are most of them employed in the ironstone mines or works there is no exceptional distress, and no special means have therefore been required to deal with it.

CAMBORNE URBAN DISTRICT (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 14,700. Assessable Value (1892–93), £35,261.

Letter from *J. R. Daniell*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress due in part to want of employment and low wages consequent upon the excessively low price of tin, upon the production of which the district is mainly dependent. The severe weather has also caused very many to be out of work, but many of them are being paid as for half-time.

2. Information as to this must be obtained.

3. No register of unemployed has hitherto been maintained, but there are men employed on relief works whose names and addresses are taken.

4. If the distress continues or increases there will probably be subscriptions opened, and from the balance of the Cornwall Miners' Relief Fund, probably assisted by funds found through or by the District Council, relief works on a tolerably large scale may be arranged. The Council consider that any local relief fund should be supplemented by a grant of money by your Board, or by the loan of money at a very low rate of interest.

CLAYTON URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 4,707. Assessable Value (1892–93), £13,316.

Letter from *B. Ashton*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

1. THE distress in this district is due to the severe weather; the mills are well employed.

2. What is being done can be classified as follows:—

(*a*). The Council have given a certain amount of employment to 25 men (exclusive of their own staff) in the work of clearing away snow.

(*b*). At the Clayton Constitutional Club a soup kitchen has been established, and about 50 needy persons have been relieved daily.

(*c*). At the Clayton Liberal Club, tickets representing 5*s*. and 10*s*. in value have been distributed, enabling the recipient to spend the money at any grocer's shop he selects; 12*l*. has been given in this way, and averaging the tickets at 6*s*. 8*d*. each, 36 persons have been relieved during the week referred to.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. A continuance of present voluntary efforts.

DARTFORD URBAN DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 11,962. Assessable Value (1892–93), £40,428.

Letter from *J. C. Hayward*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE has been a great deal of privation in this district during the past few weeks, which, in the opinion of the Council, is due to the want of employment through the severe weather, and not to circumstances peculiar to the locality.

2. No action has been taken by the public authority beyond affording employment, such as the clearing of snow and other similar work as could be carried out during the frost. Soup kitchens have been started by voluntary agency. The average daily number relieved by them during the week ended 16th February was about 400.

3. No register of the unemployed is maintained.

4. The Council have no suggestions to make under this heading, and they believe with the departure of the frost means of employment will return.

GREETLAND URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 4,283. Assessable Value (1892–93), £13,825.

Letter from *A. T. Longbottom*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, people being fairly well employed at the mills.

2. It has not been found necessary to institute relief works.

3. An unemployed register is not kept.

4. There are no suggestions to be offered.

Halstead Urban District (Essex).

Population (1891), 6,056. Assessable Value (1892–93), £11,792.

Letter from *R. Morton*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. During the frost there has been exceptional distress, due entirely to persons being in consequence thrown out of work.

2. Nothing has been done by public authorities except by employment in removing snow. A private charity organisation was temporarily and successfully formed, and a private subscription met the difficulty. About 150 to 200 families were relieved.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. The Vice-Chairman has no suggestions to offer.

Heath Town Urban District (Stafford).

Population (1891), 7,075. Assessable Value (1892–93), £9,047.

Letter from *J. Broughall*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. There is considerable distress in Heath Town owing to the severe weather, out-door workers, ironworkers, and others being thrown out of employment. There are also many locksmiths and mechanics in various trades, with little or no employment on account of bad trade.

2. The local authority have made public appeal, which has enabled them for several weeks to relieve many, and during the week ended 16th February about 150 families received assistance.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. A suggestion agreed upon by the members of the District Council is to the following effect: "That in their opinion the Guardians of the Poor should be authorised to give extra relief at such a time as the present, and that persons receiving such relief (not being paupers) should not be disfranchised thereby." Permit a second suggestion: I think the Government may devise a scheme for assisting the owners of hundreds of acres of coalpit fields in South Staffordshire (where the mines are exhausted, and which are now a barren waste, yielding no revenue) so that the mounds may be levelled, resoiled, and brought into cultivation. This would find labour for a very large number of the unemployed, who might be engaged to do the work at a low wage.

Holme Cultram Urban District (Cumberland).

Population (1891), 4,602. Assessable Value (1892–93), £18,526.

Letter from *J. S. Jackson*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in the district. I may point out that the district is chiefly an agricultural one.

2. The Surveyor to the Council gave employment to the agricultural labourers who were out of work in the cutting of roads through the snowdrifts.

3. No unemployed register is maintained. There are in the district, as in all districts, a certain number of men who are unemployed, but they are of the loafer type, and who would not in all probability work if they had the opportunity. The Council will at all times be only too glad to assist in meeting cases of distress in the district as far as lies in their power.

Mansfield Woodhouse Urban District (Nottingham).

Population (1891), 2,819. Assessable Value (1892–93), £5,559.

Letter from *W. F. Warner*, Clerk, 21st February 1895.

A large number of men are out of employment owing to the severity of the weather, but private benevolence has prevented any serious suffering, so there is no need of the public authority taking any action.

The distributions have been as follow:—Clay Pit Trustees, 150 4lb. loaves on Tuesday and Friday; private benevolent fund administered by Vicar and Guardians, soup Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; about 100 quarter-tons of coal were given also during last week. In addition to the above, much help is given by private individuals in cases of extreme need, the district containing a number of residences of people in receipt of large incomes from property.

A register has been kept of the unemployed.

MUCH WOOLTON URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 4,545. Assessable Value (1892–93), £17,911.

Letter from *H. Hatch*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. WE have exceptional distress which is chiefly due to the severe weather.

2. The District Council have opened a Labour Fund under which they are employing some 30 men in cleansing of ashpits, &c., and demolishing some disused sewerage tanks; there are also soup kitchens, and distribution of bread, coal, &c. by both the clergy and other voluntary agencies. I have no means of giving you any idea as to the number relieved in week ended 16th February 1895.

3. An unemployed register has been opened this week, but as yet can give no result, this district having so few employers of labour.

4. No suggestions to make unless the Local Government Board, or the County Council, can make a grant to assist in carrying out work, as the local rates are too high at the present.

RISHTON URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 6,010. Assessable Value (1892-93), £17,300.

Letter from *J. Hanson*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. WITH the exception of about 40 out-door workers who are out of employment there is no exceptional distress in the district.

2. A fund has been commenced, supported by voluntary contributions, enabling an allowance of 8*s.* to 9*s.* per week to be made to each adult person out of employment and in distress, and about 40 persons have been so relieved.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. I consider the means adopted for the relief of distress in this district sufficient to meet the exigencies of the case.

RYTON URBAN DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 5,553. Assessable Value (1892–93), £19,247.

Letter from *J. B. Simpson*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district. The working population are chiefly miners, who are working nearly full time at good wages, with free houses and coal. A few masons, labourers, &c., outside the collieries may have had short time owing to the bad weather, but there are no signs of any unusual distress.

2. No agencies have, therefore, been set in motion.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

4. I have no suggestion to make, and am of opinion that no extra steps will require to be taken, as there appear no indications that any future temporary distress cannot be met by the Guardians' relief and the usual private charities.

SURBITON URBAN DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 10,052. Assessable Value (1892–93), £85,894.

Letter from *J. Bell*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.

2. No necessity has arisen for anything to be done to meet any distress.

3. There has been no necessity for a register of the unemployed to be maintained.

4. The Chairman has no suggestions to make.

WEETSLADE URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), ———. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *W. Webb*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress in the Council's district. The district is almost wholly a mining district, and the pits, though not working full time, are working fairly well.

2. The above seems to embrace the answer under this number.

3. No employment register is maintained.

4. The Chairman has no suggestions to make. Should any exceptional distress take place, I am right in saying that the Chairman will immediately inform you of the fact, and will do his best to grapple with same.

WITNEY URBAN DISTRICT (OXFORD).

Population (1891), 3,110. Assessable Value (1892–93), £6,919.

Letter from *J. Marriott*, Chairman, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is a greater want of employment than usual in this district, owing principally to the severe weather, but no very exceptional distress. The out-door relief for January 1895 has been somewhat less than for January 1894.

2. Nothing has been done publicly, either by local authorities or voluntary agencies.

3. No unemployed register kept.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

ALTON RURAL DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 10,475. Rateable Value (1892–93), £59,087.

Letter from *J. G. Wood*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress has come to our notice, but of course more men than usual are out of work owing to the prolonged frost.

2. When application for relief has been made, work has been in almost every case found for the applicant by private means.

3. No unemployed register kept or needed.

4. There will be plenty of work here for the regular workmen of the district now that the frost is going.

AXMINSTER RURAL DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 10,934. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *Wm. Forward*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE does not appear to be any exceptional distress in this district.

2. Soup kitchens have been started, and soup supplied to upwards of 100 families during the week ended 16th instant. Coals and bread have also been distributed by private persons.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

4. The Council have no suggestions to make. I may add that in an agricultural district, such as this, there is always a certain amount of distress in the winter months, on account of lack of employment, but there does not seem to be much appreciable increase this year over former years.

BARNSTAPLE RURAL DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 19,071. Rateable Value (1892-93), £137,945.

Letter from *W. H. Toller*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

THERE is no very exceptional distress in this district, and it has not been necessary for the Guardians or Rural District Council to take any exceptional measures to relieve destitution among able-bodied men in consequence of the present severe weather, or other circumstances peculiar to the locality.

Relief committees have been appointed in several of the parishes to deal with the distress caused by the severe weather and other circumstances. The funds for such purpose have been raised by voluntary subscriptions.

BASINGSTOKE RURAL DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 12,408. Rateable Value (1892-93), £95,178.

Letter from *F. Jervoise*, Chairman, 22nd February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

The agricultural labourers that are not employed on the farms get constant work in the woods during the winter.

BEDFORD RURAL DISTRICT (BEDFORD).

Population (1891), 24,269. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *M. Sharman*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. IN the parish of Stevington only has there been exceptional distress in the district. The distress in this parish arose in consequence of the finishing of important railway works about the commencement of the severe weather. A considerable number of men were thus thrown out of work, and though a certain amount of distress was for a time undergone, work was ultimately found for the greater portion of the men by a large landowner in the district.

2. There has been no necessity, so far as this Council is aware, for any unusual machinery being set in motion for the relief of distress, but in the Borough of Bedford there have been several relief committees organised in addition to very effectual work by the local branch of the Charity Organisation Society.

3. No unemployed register exists at present, but the question is under the consideration of the Council.

4. It has been suggested that land in the neighbourhood of Bedford containing gravel might be purchased, and the unemployed in times of distress be engaged in digging gravel, but this has very recently been suggested.

BELCHAMP RURAL DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 5,719. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *W. Burke*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

THIS district is purely agricultural; it is of small extent compared with other Rural Districts; there is no centre of population, which last is scattered fairly evenly in small villages and isolated cottages.

1. There is more distress than usual at this time of the year, owing to agricultural work being so impeded by the severity of the weather.

2. The usual parish agencies, as represented by the resident gentry, the clergy and the farmers, are doing what they can to help their poorer neighbours. The three first comprise all the District Councillors. In their public capacity, in such a district, the only possible work they could do would be on the roads, over which they have at this time no authority.

3. No unemployed register is kept. It would be of little, if any, use in a district of this kind, where all the poor are personally known to one or other of the aforementioned agencies.

4. When the frost ceases, of which there seems a present probability, the normal number, and possibly more than the normal, of labourers will at once find regular employment on the land. The only suggestion to be made is for such a rearrangement of fiscal and other burdens which at this time press unduly on the agricultural industry as would help to a return of its former prosperity.

CASTLE WARD RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 9,679. Rateable Value (1892-93), £149,625.

Letter from *G. Wilkinson*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district. I may add that the district is almost entirely agricultural.

CHESTER RURAL DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 10,824. Rateable Value (1892–93), £89,002.

Letter from *W. Turnock*, Clerk, 23rd February 1895.

So far as we are aware, there is no exceptional distress in this district.

CHIRK RURAL DISTRICT (DENBIGH).

Population (1891), 3,820. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Darlington*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895

THIS parish is so circumstanced as to be very little affected from want of employment, and, with the exception of a few individuals thrown idle owing to the recent frost, all our people are fully employed.

CRICKHOWELL RURAL DISTRICT (BRECKNOCK).

Population (1891), 7,464. Rateable Value (1892–93), £37,247.

Letter from *J. Thomas*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE exists in this district exceptional distress, owing to the severe weather.

2. To relieve the distress, the District Council have employed eight or ten extra men to remove snow off the streets and footways. The School Board have employed 12 men excavating to prepare for extensions to the Board Schools, Brynmawr. A fund has been subscribed, and aid has been given to about 140 men. From 1*s.* to 5*s.* has been given weekly according to the number in the family. There are many who have received aid but once, and others three or four times. Soup and bread is given to women and children daily—those certified by members of the committee to be in need.

3. There is no register of unemployed kept.

CROYDON RURAL DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 28,717. Rateable Value (1892–93), £206,175.

Letter from *J. Wilson*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. FROM information at the disposal of the Council, they believe an unusually large number of men want employment in the district, but that this is due almost entirely to the severe weather.

2. For the past six weeks the Council have provided spade work at their Sewage Farm for 76 men who were unemployed, employing 38 men daily, and giving each man three days' work per week. There were only 96 applicants for such work, and preference was given to married men with families. Those to whom this work could not be offered were referred to the stone-yard opened by the Guardians of the Croydon Union. The Parish Council of Mitcham, one of the largest parishes of the district, are also finding employment for 30 unemployed men in repairing footpaths, and at Merton and Wallington, as well as at Mitcham, voluntary relief committees have been formed to relieve temporarily destitute persons who are unwilling to apply to the Relieving Officers, while in the smaller parishes special distributions of relief have been made by the district visitors connected with the parish churches and other places of worship. The Council have not, at present, been able to obtain definite information as to the average daily number relieved by each of these agencies during the week ended Saturday, the 16th February.

3. No unemployed register has hitherto been maintained by the Council, but the names and addresses of all applicants for work has been kept, with a view to their being communicated with should the Council be able to offer them further employment.

4. The Council regret they cannot, at the present time, make any practical suggestions for the purpose of relieving distress.

DARTFORD RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 32,721. Rateable Value (1892–93), £184,595.

Letter from *J. C. Hayward*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE has been a great deal of privation in this district during the past few weeks, which, in the opinion of the Council, is due to the want of employment through the severe weather, and not to circumstances peculiar to the locality.

2. No action has been taken by the public authority, and it is not possible to give any statistics with regard to relief given by voluntary agencies, as the relief given in this direction has been through private charity in each parish, in regard to which no record has been kept.

3. No register of the unemployed is maintained.

4. The Council have no suggestions to make under this heading, and they believe, with the departure of th frost, means of employment will return.

DONCASTER RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 27 462. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *F. E. Nicholson*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district which has come to the notice of this Authority, and this Authority have not been asked to take any steps for the provision of extra labour in the district.

No unemployed register is kept.

In several of the parishes soup kitchens, &c., have been opened, supported by voluntary subscriptions, the necessity for these being the recent severe weather. I cannot furnish any particulars of the number of persons out of employment at the present time.

DORKING RURAL DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 10,091. Rateable Value (1892-93), £68,936.

Letter from *George Scales*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, other than of a temporary nature, in consequence of the prolonged frost.

2. Voluntary agencies have so far been able to deal adequately with such temporary distress.

3. No register of unemployed is kept.

4. The Rural District Council has no suggestions to make.

EVESHAM RURAL DISTRICT (WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 7,142. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *Edward Wadams*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is not any very exceptional distress in this district, but a great many labourers have only occasional employment, owing to the severe weather.

2. No special provision has been made by this Council, neither has any application been made to the Guardians for out-door relief by able-bodied men in consequence of being out of employment, and, as the frost is now breaking up, there will be no lack of employment in this district.

3. It has not been found necessary to keep an unemployed register.

4. It is not considered necessary at the present time to make any suggestion.

GARSTANG RURAL DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 12,151. Rateable Value (1892-93), £124,051.

Letter from *G. B. Stone*, Chairman, 25th February 1895.

WE have had no distress from want of employment in the district of this Council.

GUISBOROUGH RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 6,935. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *W. Robinson*, Assistant Clerk, 25th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this Union, and there have been only two applications from able-bodied men for relief during the four weeks ending the 19th instant, in consequence of the severe weather, and in each of these cases there was work for the applicants on the return of better weather.

HELMSLEY RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 5,626. Rateable Value (1892–93), £38,722.

Letter from *Robert Pearson*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district beyond what the Guardians can cope with in the usual way.

2. Nothing exceptional.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. Nothing further required in this district.

HINCKLEY RURAL DISTRICT (LEICESTER).

Population (1891), 10,162. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *B. Hurst*, Chairman, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, and what distress there is (which is principally with bricklayers, quarrymen, and labourers) is due to the severe weather.

2. The distress has been, and is being, met by voluntary agencies, viz., the distribution of money collected, and the giving of soup, &c. It will be difficult, except at much trouble and time occupied, to ascertain the average daily number relieved by voluntary agencies, each parish having several agencies, and there being nine or ten parishes in the district. Still, if required, and it is not too late, this shall be done without a moment's delay on hearing from you.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. I have no suggestions to make, except that I believe the distress has been, and will be, fully met by voluntary agencies in this district.

HUNTINGDON RURAL DISTRICT (HUNTINGDON).

Population (1891), 7,968. Rateable Value (1892–93), £81,720.

Letter from *E. W. Hunnybun*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress exists in this locality.

2. The great decrease in the population of the rural parishes of this district has largely reduced the number of labourers dependent on such occasional work as drainage, &c.; and the inhabitants of the villages are now little more than sufficient for the regular work of farmers—horsekeeping, shepherding, and attendance on cattle. No steps have, therefore, been taken by public authorities or by voluntary agencies.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. No suggestions are therefore made.

LLANELLY RURAL DISTRICT (CARMARTHEN).

Population (1891), 21,517. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *D. C. Edwards*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

THERE is, fortunately, not much exceptional distress in this district. At the same time, I am desired to state that if necessary the Chairman of the Guardians of this Union would be prepared, when required, to give evidence before the Select Committee recently appointed to consider this question.

MARKET BOSWORTH RURAL DISTRICT (LEICESTER).

Population (1891), 15,640. Rateable Value (1892-93), £97,274.

Letter from *T. Cope*, Chairman, 25th February 1895.

1. THE exceptional distress in this Union, at no times alarming, is now disappearing. It was mainly caused by the severe weather, which caused a stoppage of work in the quarries. On the other hand, it rather stimulated work in the collieries, which are now working about half time. There has been a considerable increase of out-door relief during the last six weeks. This has been chiefly due to illness caused by the severity of the weather. The only applications for relief from able-bodied men were from a few farm labourers thrown out of employment by the frost.

2. The

2. The labourers in the stone-quarries at Mackfield Ratby and Stanton have been largely relieved by their employers, Messrs. Ellis and Everard, by the Countess of Stamford, and other voluntary agencies. They number about 400, and are now resuming work.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. No exceptional relief is now required.

MIDDLETON CHENEY RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1892), 2,606. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *A. Cartwright*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is, and has been, no exceptional distress in this district.

2. There has been nothing done by any voluntary agency beyond ordinary relief by private persons, in the shape of coal, where needed.

3. No unemployed register is kept, as there have been no persons out of work.

4. No suggestions are needed, as there will be plenty of employment in the ordinary routine of spring cultivation.

MILDENHALL RURAL DISTRICT (WEST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 8,559. Rateable Value (1892–93), £46,181.

Letter from *O. F. Read*, Chairman, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE has been exceptional distress in this district during the last two months, arising from the severe weather, which entirely put an end to agricultural work, upon which the poor are entirely dependent.

2. Nothing has been done to meet the distress by public authorities, and very little by voluntary agencies.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. I would suggest that the works upon which labour may be employed by Boards of Guardians should be extended. Those named in the Circular * of the Local Government Board are not applicable to a purely agricultural district. The work should certainly be spade husbandry, and be not limited to sewage farms only. Last year the Board of Guardians, in the exercise of what they believed to be their powers, hired a piece of land to be cultivated by spade husbandry, and a large number of men were employed, to the great relief of the poor rate. Your Board, however, declined to sanction the arrangement, on the ground that the Guardians had exceeded their powers. The Guardians naturally shrink from undertaking any relief works in future. I am strongly of opinion that Boards of Guardians or District Councils ought to have power to hire lands for the purposes of cultivation. In a large purely agricultural district it is not likely that there will be any public works or street-making going on, which might be considered for the benefit of the whole district.

NEW FOREST RURAL DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON AND WILTS).

Population (1891), 13,992. Rateable Value (1892–93), £74,271.

Letter from *W. Coxwell*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE has been no exceptional distress in the New Forest Union during the severe weather.

2. It has not been considered necessary to do anything.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. I cannot suggest anything for a Rural District like this.

NEWPORT PAGNELL RURAL DISTRICT (BUCKINGHAM).

Population (1891), 25,613. Rateable Value (1892-93), £175,484.

Letter from *J. R. Wilmer*, Chairman, 25th February 1895.

1. THE distress is not exceptional, and is only due to the severe weather.

2. There has been nothing done by the public authorities; but voluntary aid has been invoked, and in Newport Pagnell alone, with under 4,000 inhabitants, over 100 families received coal, grocery, and other tickets for the week ending 16th February. In other parts of the Union this course has also prevailed. I might add that in this town we have instituted a relief committee, and this sits to judge cases, and keeps a register, relieving chiefly those out of employ, consisting of bricklayers and kindred trades affected by weather.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

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* See note * on page 87.

NEW WINCHESTER RURAL DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 11,613. Rateable Value (1892–93), £96,931.

Letter from *F. Faithfull*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district calling for any special steps to be taken.

PEBWORTH RURAL DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 3,091. Rateable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *G. D. Bourne*, Chairman, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress.
2. There are private soup kitchens.
3. No unemployed register kept.
4. No suggestions to make.

PLOMESGATE RURAL DISTRICT (EAST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 18,491. Rateable Value (1892–93), £94,136.

Letter from *C. H. Read*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

No exceptional distress has occurred in this district.

POCKLINGTON RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, EAST RIDING).

Population (1891), 12,002. Rateable Value (1892–93), £121,171.

Letter from *Thomas Robson*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district at the present time.
2. The distress which existed during the recent severe weather has been met by voluntary subscriptions
3. There is no unemployed register.
4. No suggestions are offered by the Council, under the circumstances stated in paragraph 1.

RICCALL RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, EAST RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,126. Rateable Value (1892-93), £——.

Letter from *E. Townend*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

THE Council are of opinion that there has been very little distress in this district. Many parents have felt the burden of maintaining their sons who have come home from large towns out of work; these are the worst cases of distress in the Riccall district. Farmers, as a rule, keep their men throughout the winter.

ROCHFORD RURAL DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 14,948. Rateable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *S. S. Baker*, Chairman, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is very little exceptional distress in this district beyond what is due to the severe weather.

2. The public authority have not considered it necessary to take any exceptional measures, as at present no application has been made to them, but soup kitchens have been opened at Rayleigh and Leigh. In the latter place about 150 persons have been relieved, almost exclusively fishermen, who have been prevented from following their usual occupation.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The public authority would doubtless consider the necessary steps to take when the occasion arises. The contents of your Circular will be laid before the Rochford District Council at their next meeting.

ROSS RURAL DISTRICT (HEREFORD).

Population (1891), 12,114. Rateable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *G. F. Minett*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

DISTRESS amongst the unemployed has not been to any great extent exceptional in this district, and such as has existed has been well met by private charity, and, further, as the severity of the weather has now abated, matters are returning to a normal condition.

RUGBY RURAL DISTRICT (WARWICK).

Population (1891), 13,775. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *G. V. Hefford*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

THE Council are not aware of the existence of any exceptional distress in this district, although a certain amount of distress has been occasioned by the recent severe weather. This distress has been met locally by voluntary agencies, but they have no means of ascertaining the average daily number relieved by such agencies during the week ended on the 16th February.

No unemployed register is maintained.

ST. FAITH'S RURAL DISTRICT (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 12,183. Rateable Value (1892-93), £66,613.

Letter from *Rev. H. Howell*, Chairman, 25th February 1895.

I FELT that my best plan to obtain the fullest information to enable me, as Chairman of the St. Faith's Board of Guardians—the body having to deal with the poor—to answer your questions, was to put myself in communication with the two Relieving Officers of the Board, both of them men to be thoroughly relied on and to be trusted.

They both agree that (with the exception of one parish, that of St. Faith's, to which I shall call your attention by-and-bye), there has been no exceptional distress in the Union.

2. Several large families have been relieved and liberally so on account of sickness, intensified by the extreme cold, the heads of these families being ordinary able-bodied men; the Relieving Officers further state that, from information they have received, the relief has been higher in their Union than in the neighbouring ones. From my own knowledge voluntary assistance has been abundant in many of the parishes of the Union, but I have not heard of any organisations for this purpose.

3. No register has existed, but one was proposed at our last meeting for a single parish—that of St. Faith's—but the motion was negatived, as the weather was breaking up.

To revert to what I have mentioned in my first answer with reference to St. Faith's as exceptional, I was not aware of it until to-day, as no exceptional applications have been made, but I had understood that many of the men had taken to weaving in consequence of a sudden and unexpected demand.

SELBY RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 6,137. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *E. Townend*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

THE Council are of opinion that there has been very little exceptional distress in this district, and what has been is in consequence of the very severe weather. The farmers throughout this district keep their men engaged in the winter, consequently there are not any men out of work.

TADCASTER RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 25,977. Rateable Value (1892-93), £188,403.

Letter from *E. C. Brooksbank*, Chairman, 24th February 1895.

IN further reply to your circular, relating to distress in the district, I find on inquiry that distress exists at Sherburn, Kippax, and Tadcaster, and that at Kippax and Tadcaster it is being met by voluntary efforts; and that the distress in these places is due to the severity of the weather.

TETBURY RURAL DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER AND WILTS).

Population (1891), 4,386. Rateable Value (1892-93), £28,125.

Letter from *W. A. Buye*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. FROM inquiries made of the Councillors present at the last meeting it was thought that there was no exceptional distress in the district of this Council.

2. Nothing has been done to meet any distress there may be, except by private charity.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. The Council are of opinion that, where possible, work should be found for the unemployed in digging stones for the repair of roads and walls, and in making footpaths, &c.

THORNBURY RURAL DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 16,765. Rateable Value (1892–93), £138,123.

Letter from *H. P. Thurston*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, other than that which must be necessarily occasioned by the late severe weather.

2. The distress has been quite met by voluntary agencies and private charity. In the parish of Thornbury, where perhaps matters were the most urgent, the wants of the unemployed and the poor have been admirably relieved, upwards of 70 families having been daily provided during the recent inclement weather with food and firing; 34 workmen have also been employed, by private subscriptions.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. The Chairman has no particular suggestion to make.

The Circular * of the Local Government Board of 11th February has been considered by the District Council, but it is not considered necessary at present to open any relief works.

WARE RURAL DISTRICT (HERTFORD).

Population (1891), 14,367. Rateable Value (1892–93), £86,805.

Letter from *G. H. Gisby*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

IMMEDIATELY upon receipt of the communication I, by desire of the Chairman, addressed a circular letter to the clergymen and Councillors of each of the parishes in this Rural District, asking for information with respect to each parish upon the points mentioned in your circular. I have now received replies to all my communications, and the consensus of opinion is that there is no exceptional distress in any of the parishes in the Rural District of Ware Union.

In one or two of the parishes there are a few persons out of employment by reason of the severe weather, but they seem to be well cared for by the charitable agencies. I have also made inquiries of the Relieving Officers in the Union, so far as the rural parishes are concerned, and the statistics they give me confirm what has been stated as to there being no exceptional distress in the district.

There is no register of unemployed maintained, and although I have received in reply to my inquiries several suggestions on the subject of remedies for relieving such distress as exists, I do not think that it is necessary for the purposes of the information you require to forward them to you.

WAYLAND RURAL DISTRICT (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 10,505. Rateable Value (1892–93), £68,674.

Letter from *E. U. Browne*, Chairman, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE has been a certain amount of distress in this district in consequence of the severe weather.

2. This has been met by private charity on the part of residents in each locality.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The change of weather will probably bring employment.

WEM RURAL DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 10,119. Rateable Value (1892–93), £88,256.

Letter from *H. P. Cox*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is a certain amount of exceptional distress existing, but only such as is caused by the severe weather.

2. Such distress is met by voluntary effort, and there is no necessity for public authorities to take any step in the matter. Relief in the shape of coal, bread, and soup has been given three days a week, the numbers so relieved in the week ended the 16th instant being about 150 families.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. The efforts at present made are quite sufficient to meet any distress likely to arise, and, as is usual in similar cases, it is found that a number of persons participate in the relief who object to work under any circumstances.

WETHERBY RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 14,984. Rateable Value (1892–93), £113,948.

Letter from *E. H. Coates*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress.

2. Voluntary agencies have been formed in the district, and all who are in need are well attended to, and I am to state that the farmers in this district do not discharge their men on account of frosts, &c.

3. No unemployed register kept.

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* See note * on page 87.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

Kensington Parish.

Population (1891), 166,308. Rateable Value (1892–93), £2,033,523.

Letter from *W. C. Leete*, Vestry Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. As far as the two standing committees of the Vestry can learn, the total amount of distress in the parish is not so great this year as in former years—at least the number of persons who have applied to have their names registered as applicants for employment, apart from the casual labour employed in connection with "snowfalls," has not been so large, as will be seen from the following figures:—Number of applicants for work registered in 1893, 1,056; in 1894, 374; and in 1895, 286. The recent severe weather has of course, as it always does, caused an entire cessation of out door work in the building and other kindred trades, but as is pointed out in the memorandum which the committees understand the Surveyor to the Vestry (Mr. William Weaver) has already forwarded to the Secretary of the Select Committee, the extra severity of the weather has in itself supplied a partial remedy, a large number of men having found work on the ice, or in carrying water into houses from the stand-pipes in the streets.

2. The committees are unable to state what the Board of Guardians, who are the duly constituted relief authority in the parish, have done to meet any exceptional distress which they may have found to prevail, but so far as the Vestry are concerned, whilst they have been able to give work to a large number of additional hands in the removal of snow (particulars of the number of men employed and the expense incurred being given as an Appendix A hereto), the necessity has not arisen for the vestry to resort, as they have in periods of exceptional distress which have occurred in the past, to making labour for the unemployed by providing granite spalls to be broken by the men at the Vestry's stoneyard. It should be mentioned that in Kensington, as in many of the other parishes of the Metropolis, there are very valuable organisations for the relief of distress in the form of philanthropic societies; and it has been thought well to mention in Appendix B. the most prominent of these societies, giving the names and addresses of their secretaries, and to make the suggestion that these gentlemen would no doubt be able and willing to give serviceable information as to the work of their societies, should the Board think it expedient to communicate with them.

3. An unemployed register has been for some years kept by the Surveyor, it being from such register that the information above set forth as to the number of applicants for work in this and previous years has been taken.

4. The committees understand that the Surveyor to the Vestry has put forward certain suggestions in the memorandum already referred to herein, which will no doubt receive the consideration of the Select Committee.

(Appendices above referred to).

APPENDIX A.

Statement furnished by the Surveyor to the Vestry relative to the number of Auxiliary Staff and Wages paid to same between the periods the 2nd January and the 20th February.

During 30 days (January 2nd to February 5th) 6,501 men have been employed, or an average number of 217 per day, 3*s.* 1*d.* per day being the average amount earned by each man; 263 men, acting as leading men of gangs, were paid at the rate of 6*d.* per hour, the remaining 6,238 receiving 5*d.* per hour. The total amount paid for this labour is 1,008*l.* 18*s.* 1*d.* From February 6th to February 20th 518 days' work has been given to an average daily number of 40 men in removing ice from roads adjacent to the stand-pipes of the water companies, and in removing and trimming snow, &c., in the depôts. The average amount earned each day per man has been 3*s.* 9*d.*, and the total amount paid for this extra work 97*l.* 11*s.* 8*d.* Total sum paid this winter for extra labour in Kensington, up to the 20th February, therefore, amounts to 1,106*l.* 9*s.* 9*d.*, disbursed for 7,019 days' work. In addition to the above-mentioned extra labour the Vestry's ordinary staff of about 600 workmen has continued (with slight stoppages) at work, the wages paid to such regular workmen amounting to about 800*l.* per week.

APPENDIX B.

Notting Hill and North Kensington Philanthropic Society, A. V. Parkhouse, 152, Lancaster-road, North Kensington, W. Notting Hill Philanthropic Institution (No. 31), Charles Otley, 17, Ackland-road, Kensington, W. Kensington Philanthropic Society, S. Hewitt, 69, Abingdon-road, Kensington, W. Kensington and Chelsea Philanthropic Society, J. E. Kitchingman, 112, Fulham-road, S.W. North Kensington Friendly Workers amongst the Poor Society, E. P. Smith, 28, Colville-square, Kensington, W.

II.—COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Leeds County Borough.

Population (1891), 367,505. Rateable Value (1892-93), £1,305,492.

Letter from *P. Gilston*, Mayor, 26th February 1895.

1. There has no doubt been exceptional distress in Leeds, not so much due to circumstances peculiar to the locality as to the severe and long-continued storm.

2. On the 7th February I called a meeting in my rooms of some of the principal inhabitants for the following day, and the following print of an advertisement which appeared in the local papers of Saturday, February 9th, will show what was done, and that nearly 1,000*l.* was promised in the room:—

"At a Meeting specially convened by the Mayor of Leeds (Alderman Gilston), and held in the Mayor's Rooms to-day, it was resolved as follows :

"This Meeting, seeing that great distress prevails in the city amongst the Unemployed, largely increased by the long continuance of severe weather, is of opinion that the time has arrived when a Public Fund should be opened for the relief of such distress, and that his Worship the Mayor be-desired to open such Fund, and that a Central Committee be formed from this Meeting (with power to add to the number) for the purpose of assisting the Mayor in carrying out the objects of the present resolution."

It was also resolved that an urgent appeal should be made to the public for donations to the fund, and the following resolution was passed with reference to its administration :—

"That, with a view to the really urgent, necessitous, and deserving cases being reached, this meeting is of opinion that the following would be a satisfactory and convenient mode of distributing any donations received by the Central Committee, viz. :—

"That grants be made by the Central Committee from time to time to existing local charitable institutions in the free discretion of the committee, and also to any special committees that may be formed for the purpose of dealing with any district distress, and that the Central Committee be desired to carry out this mode of distributing the Fund."

[*Here follow the names of the Committee*].

"The committee earnestly appeal to the public for donations of any amount to the fund, and trust that, having regard to the pressing necessities of the case, the response will be immediate and generous."

[*Here follows the first list of donations*].

"The Central Relief Committee will sit in the Mayor's Rooms this (Saturday) morning, from ten to one o'clock, to consider applications from representatives of charitable institutions, and also from clergymen and ministers, for grants to meet particularly urgent cases, so that the relief may be actually given to-day if possible, 9th February, 1895. The committee will also meet in the Mayor's Rooms every afternoon next week at three o'clock."

After the meeting (on the same day) several grants were made to existing charity organisations, and on the following day, Saturday, 9th February, the committee made many further grants to clergymen and ministers, who attended in pursuance of the advertisement given above, the special objects of these grants being to meet particularly urgent cases, and so that the relief might be actually given that day. In addition, some 400 persons were supplied with food tickets at the Town Hall, mostly of the value of 2*s.* each. By the following Monday (11th February), a special relief committee had been formed in most of the 16 wards of the city by the Alderman and Councillors of each ward, and the day after (Tuesday, 12th February), a committee met specially in each ward to distribute relief, and notice thereof was given by me to the unemployed. From this date I believe every reported verified case of distress has been reasonably met. Up to the present time a little over £5,000 in money, and about £500 in kind have been promised to the fund; and about £3,000 cash and the goods have been distributed. The Central Committee met from the 8th to the 23rd instant, in my rooms every week-day, and empowered the ward committees to issue tickets to meet every deserving case, and I believe this has been done. I regret I am not able to state the number of families or persons relieved, but I hope to obtain this information later. During the first week of distribution, say from the 8th to the 16th February—first, the existing charity organisations and clergymen and ministers, and then the ward committees, took special pains to meet all cases, without even, in many instances, the delay of what might be considered necessary inquiries.

3. An unemployed register has not been opened this year, as the distress appeared to be not more than normal for the winter season, until the end of January or the beginning of February, when I opened a public distress relief fund, with the result previously stated. In the winters of 1892-3 and 1893-4 such a register was maintained, and work was found for a large number of the unemployed by the Corporation, a detailed statement in regard to which is being prepared, and I hope to forward it to you to-morrow. In fact about 140 were continued in employment through the summer and up to the commencement of the storm at Christmas, and these, and probably a number of others, will commence work as soon as the weather will permit.

4. It is considered that the course adopted by the Central Relief Committee and the ward committees above referred to, has up to the present time fairly met the exceptional distress which prevails in Leeds. The comparatively mild weather which has set in this week will, it is hoped and believed, have the result of enabling a large number of those who have hitherto been prevented working by the severe weather to resume their ordinary out-door employment. The relief committee are already beginning to find the claims upon them largely moderated. The Ex-Mayor, Mr. Councillor Leuty, has given notice of the following resolution for the Council Meeting to be held on Wednesday, the 6th March :—"That the Corporate Property Committee be instructed forthwith to open a Labour Bureau for the purpose of ascertaining the number of unemployed in the City, and that they be also instructed, if the Labour Bureau show the necessity for it, to push forward any necessary public works, with a view to finding as far as practicable temporary work for the most necessitous and deserving of the unemployed."

I cannot, of course, anticipate what the decision of the Council will be thereon.

Reading County Borough.

Population (1891), 60,054. Rateable Value (1892-93), £268,757.

Letter from *H. Day*, Town Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1 and 2. With a view to obtaining definite information in answer to the questions (1) and (2) in the circular letter, I thought it right to address representatives of several voluntary agencies which have been administering relief. I have received in reply communications, copies of which are enclosed, and I think that not only the facts stated but also the opinions expressed in those communications may be taken as indicating correctly the general opinion as to the existing state of facts referred to in the several communications.

3. An unemployed register has been kept in this borough, at the store premises of the Corporation, since the 19th of November last in a form containing headings for "Name," "Address," "Where last employed," "Occupation," "Married or single," "Number of children if married," and "General remarks," and in it only the names of persons who have resided in the borough for six months should be entered. There are at the present time the names of 209 men on this register, and I enclose memoranda comprising extracts from reports of the Borough Surveyor explaining the number of persons who have been set on work, the nature of the work upon which they have been employed, and the wages earned by them. The only work which it has been possible for this Corporation to provide during the prolonged frost for men out of employ has been stone breaking, the cleansing of the highways, and the delivery of water to householders who have been deprived (as they still are) of their supply of water

water in the ordinary manner. There are no special works on hand or in contemplation upon which a number of men could be employed; indeed, it has been impossible for contractors for works of making up new streets, or for much of the ordinary agricultural work on the Corporation's Sewage Farm, to proceed during the frost.

I may, perhaps, explain that the relief administered by the several voluntary agencies referred to in this letter, except those represented by the Vicar of St. Mary's, Reading, included, in addition to the ordinary funds of those agencies, a sum of about 136*l.*, which was formed partly of a balance of a fund raised under the auspices of the Mayor for the relief of persons residing in this borough, who suffered injury in connection with the floods of last November in the Thames Valley, and partly of some subscriptions recently obtained. With regard to the distribution of soup referred to in several of the communications from the voluntary agencies, I believe that in some instances a small charge has been made of a halfpenny or one penny per quart for the soup.

(Communications before referred to).

Coley Soup Kitchen, 21 February 1895.

Writing as the Vicar of St. Mary the Virgin, Reading, I beg to say that, although the prolonged frost has caused a certain amount of exceptional distress, it can well be met, and is being met, by the usual methods of relief. My assistant clergy and visitors of charity have carefully distributed coal, bread, and grocery tickets, and the soup kitchen in St. Saviour's district and also that in St. Mark's district are distributing soup twice in the week, and, on the whole, I may say that no case of real distress is overlooked. There is very little sickness. The prompt measures taken by the Floods Committee prevented any outbreak of epidemic in the district affected by the floods, and the fact that the biscuit factory is working full time is a very seasonable help to the working classes in my parish. As soon as the frost disappears any exceptional distress will cease.

(signed) *Nicholas T. Garry.*

St. George's Soup Kitchen, 21 February 1895.

You ask me a difficult question, as we have no such thing as daily relief. By soup kitchen opened Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays some 110 different families were relieved at each distribution, and, speaking roughly, I should say some ten persons were relieved each day; but relief may have been given more than once to the same person during the week, and the same families would send each time for soup and bread to the soup kitchen. During the week ended 16th February 540 quarts of soup were distributed, with 27 gallons of bread and two barrels of broken biscuits. In addition, some 3*l.* were expended on tickets for bread, groceries, and coal. I believe most of the people in the parish have work to go to as soon as the severe weather breaks; it was felt sooner by many, they having been thrown out last spring by the strike in the building trade, just when they as labourers looked for employment. I fear I must add also that with many exceptional distress is the natural result of intemperate and improvident habits. The men who for some time have been in distress for want of employment are plasterers, several of whom reside in this parish.

(signed) *John Stewart.*

The Reading Temperance Society, 21 February 1895.

The average number of persons relieved daily by the Reading Temperance Society's Relief Mission for the week ended Saturday, 16th February, was 295. The committee also desire me to say that in their opinion there is an abnormal amount of distress existing in the town arising from general depression. Added to this, the reports received from our visitors reveal an increasing amount of suffering and want amongst the working classes, who are thrown out of employment by the severity of the weather.

(signed) *Charles Moss.*

Silver Street Soup Kitchen, 21 February 1895.

About 100 persons are relieved (*i.e.*, are given soup) daily. In addition to this, a grant from the Floods Relief Committee has lately enabled us to supply bread and butter, tea, and sugar to 100 selected families, and a considerable number of dinners as well. Speaking for myself and those with whom I work, I have not the slightest doubt that there has been great distress owing to the frost having kept so many men out of employment. On the other hand, owing to the exceptional efforts that have been made to meet that distress, it has been very much mitigated, and at present, should the thaw continue and work be again possible for those employed out-of-doors, things would probably return very much to their normal condition. There is no doubt that the strike in the early summer of this year has had much to do with this distress. The majority of the labouring class speak very strongly on the subject. There having been no opportunity to lay by anything during the summer, the severity of the winter has been more felt than would otherwise have been the case, especially as the strike prevented the commencement of work which might have been carried on during the winter.

(signed) *R. D. Bruce.*

Sunday Evening Mission, 22 February 1895.

During the week ended 16th February we distributed, on an average, 160 gallons of soup and 25 gallons of bread per day. Thirty gallons or more of the soup was partaken of by about 120 men and boys at the kitchen, and the remainder was distributed to some 200 to 300 families, in quantities of one, two, and three quarts each. We consider the great distress of the past six weeks is in the main owing to the continued severe frost, coming at a time when work generally is scarce, though, no doubt, it has been accentuated by the fact that the bricklayers' and labourers' strike, and also the continued heavy rains of last autumn, threw a good many out of employment, thus hindering them in making any provision for such severe weather.

(signed) *J. C. Fidler, Jun.*

Philanthropic Institution, 21 February 1895.

The committee during five days relieved from the grant from the Mayor's Fund 242 families of unemployed men, a daily average of 48.

It is the opinion of the committee that the existing distress is caused almost entirely by the hard frost, the recipients being generally bricklayers, plasterers, gardeners, painters, and out-door labourers. Perhaps 10 or 15 per cent. would be owing to dulness of trade. In addition to the distribution of the Mayor's Fund to the unemployed, the committee gave 12*l.* 14*s.*, by tickets and grants, to the sick and needy in the town from 11th to 16th instant.

(signed) *S. Sharwood.*

Temperance and General Philanthropic Society and Charity Organization Society, 21 February 1895.

The daily average of families relieved by my agencies during the week ended 16th February was 156; the total number relieved during the week being 940. It is the opinion of those who co-operate with me that the greater part of the distress is due to circumstances peculiar to the locality (as, for instance, the painters' and bricklayers' strikes, the effects of which are still felt in the town) and to the severe weather; the remainder (about one-ninth of the total) is due to the prevailing depression of trade.

(signed) *D. W. Bishop-Ackerman.*

The Friends' Adult School, 21 February 1895.

The average number of members of Church-street Adult Sunday School relieved last week was 16. Of these, 10 were out of work owing to the exceptional weather; the other 6, with 4 not relieved, were out of work through the general

general slackness of trade or through feeble health. There are probably several others out of work whose position, owing to their thrifty habits, did not necessitate their cases being brought before our Benevolent Committee. Our Savings Bank and Provident Institution in connection with the school provide for the rainy day with most of our scholars. It is those who have made no such provision that have to be helped by the Benevolent Fund.

(signed) *John Messer.*

(Extracts from Surveyor's Reports before referred to.) 25 January 1895.

"The following return shows the number of persons applying for employment since the establishment of the Labour Bureau at the Caversham-road Depôt:—162 labourers, 33 painters, 2 bricklayers, 3 bakers, 1 plasterer, 1 butcher, 1 shoemaker, 1 grocer's porter, 1 cooper, and 2 gardeners—total, 208; consisting of 66 single and 142 married men. The average number of children to each married man is three. On the first day of opening, 170 applicants registered their names, and 38 since. The average number of men applying for work during the last six weeks has not averaged two a-day. During the snowfall no one applied at all."

22 February 1895.

"In accordance with the statement made by His Worship the Mayor at a meeting of Council on the 7th instant, a stone-yard was opened at the Corporation Depôt in the Caversham-road on Monday, the 11th instant, to provide labour for those out of work, and who may have resided within the Borough of Reading for at least six months. Since the opening 196 men have applied for work, of whom 110 have failed or refused; five have obtained other employment, and 81 are still at labour. The wages paid to last night were: stone-breaking, 54*l.* 11*s.* 7*d.*; carrying water, 19*l.* 2*s.*; clearing away ice, 3*l.* 15*s.*—total, 77*l.* 8*s.* 7*d.* Payment has been made to the men at the rate of 2*s.* 6*d.* per cubic yard, and the maximum wage allowed in one week is 12*s.* 6*d.*; the average earnings for stone-breaking about 1*s.* 10*d.* per day to each man. The necessary stock of granite block stone—650 tons—has been ordered for the purpose, and about 500 yards have up to the present been broken. A portion of the staff and apparatus of the Highway Department and some of the unemployed have, since Tuesday, the 19th instant, been assisting the Water Works Department in the distribution of water during the frost. The Highways and Drainage Departments have, since the 28th instant, by the direction of the Chairmen of the several committees at a meeting on the 27th instant, been engaged in the removal of ordure from those tenements specially reported by the medical officer where private house drains have failed owing to the continued frost."

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Kidderminster Municipal Borough (Worcester).

Population (1891), 24,803. Rateable Value (1892-93), £78,174.

Letter from *M. Tomkinson*, Mayor, 25th February 1895.

Some distress, no doubt (owing to the recent frost), exists in the Borough of Kidderminster amongst the labourers employed in the adjacent market gardens, and the boatmen employed on the canal, but it has been in a large degree met by private efforts, and I have, last week, opened a public relief fund for the distribution of coal and bread; 170 loaves and 118 cwt. of coal have been given away. The staple trade of the town is carpet weaving, and owing to the depression caused by the closing of foreign markets and free imports of foreign-made carpets and rugs, including Indian gaol-made fabrics, a number of weavers are now out of work. They have, however, an Association, which has a large accumulated capital (which they reserve for trade union purposes only), amounting to about 10,000*l.* There are also a number of "professional" unemployed, some of whom, when offered work at 2*s.* 6*d.* a day by the local authority, have declined to accept it. The daily average relieved cannot be accurately stated, but during the week ended 16th February 1895 a soup kitchen supplied 485 families with soup and bread. Considerable amounts, in money and kind, have been further distributed by the clergy of the several parishes in the borough.

No unemployed register has been kept, it being considered unnecessary—no very acute distress having been discovered.

Leamington Municipal Borough (Warwick).

Population (1891), 26,930. Rateable Value (1892-93), £168,099.

Letter from *T. W. Thursfield*, Mayor, 26th February 1895.

In order to obtain reliable information I caused a circular to be sent to 12 representative men, as follows:—The Town Clerk of the borough, the Borough Surveyor, the Relieving Officer of the borough, the Vicars of all the Established churches, the Roman Catholic priest, the ministers of the two principal Nonconformist bodies, the secretary of the Charity Organization Society.

1. Eight of these gentlemen have replied that there is exceptional distress, and that it is specially due to the severity of the weather. Two have replied that they are not aware of any exceptional distress, and two consider that there is not much.

2. I find that all are of opinion that the existing charitable organizations have been found sufficient to relieve the exceptional distress. The Charity Organization Society, during the week ended 16th February, relieved 210 families at an expense of 58*l.* 7*s.*; 441 persons received out-door relief from the Poor Law; about 40*l.* per week extra has been paid in the Surveyor's department, who has employed, on an average, 60 more men per week. All the rest of my correspondents believe that the existing organizations are sufficient to cope with the distress.

3. All reply that they are unaware of any unemployed register being maintained.

4. Six out of the 12 decline to make any suggestion. One considers that work, which is usually done largely during the summer, should be partially done during the winter. Two consider that public works should be undertaken. Two consider that municipal works of a necessary character should be done at this time, and two consider that no public works are necessary.

After carefully considering the answers that I have received from these gentlemen, who may be considered to have special knowledge on these points, and to be aware of the real state of things at present existing within this borough, and

and coupling the information which I have received from them with that which has come under my own observation, I am of opinion :—

I.—That there is a considerable amount of exceptional distress due to two causes—firstly and chiefly, to the severity of the weather; and, secondly, to the depression of the trade of the country generally, which is affecting this community, as it does others.

II.—I am of opinion that the exceptional distress is being well met by voluntary agencies and public authorities. There are seven soup kitchens at the present moment in full working order, and the amount of soup gratuitously distributed within the borough is not less than 2,200 quarts per week, together with about 350 loaves of bread. The charity organizations are distributing large quantities of coal, together with a considerable amount of relief in money and in kind.

III.—There is no unemployed register maintained within this borough, and looking at the fact that this borough is mainly a place of resort, as well as a place of residence of the well-to-do classes, I do not think that there is any great necessity for the establishment of such a register, though I shall be happy to adopt any suggestion on the point that may be made by the Committee which is now sitting.

IV.—As I think that the distress which exists is being well met by voluntary agencies, and by public authorities, I have no further suggestions to make.

STAMFORD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (PARTS OF KESTEVEN).

Population (1891), 8,358. Rateable Value (1892-93), £31,955.

Letter from *J. E. Atter*, Town Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. THE exceptionally severe weather caused for a time some exceptional distress in this borough.

2. Soup kitchens, where soup has been gratuitously given away, and penny dinners, and other similar voluntary agencies, have been here adopted to meet such distress.

3. There is not here maintained any unemployed register.

4. The Mayor has not, nor have I, any definite suggestion to make for the purpose of relieving such distress. The Circular Letter* from the Board of the 11th instant specifies certain works which the Board suggest may be undertaken. The adoption here of the suggestion, or the execution here of any work of the nature stated, does not, under the local conditions existing, appear to be expedient or desirable.

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (WARWICK).

Population (1891), 8,318. Rateable Value (1892-93), £34,702.

Letter from *R. Lunn*, Town Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. THERE is, and has been, exceptional distress in the district, attributable chiefly to the severe weather.

2. The Council are aiding their general water supply by obtaining from the canal a supply of water for the purpose of flushing the sewers. Eighteen men were employed in laying the necessary pipes in the streets from November last, but the work was stopped by the frost on the 25th January. In consequence of the partial thaw the work was again undertaken yesterday by 12 men. The following is extracted from the minutes of the last Council meeting held on the 12th instant: "The Mayor called attention to the distress in the borough arising chiefly from the continued severe weather, and the consequently large number of unemployed, and suggested as a means of partially alleviating the distress that the town yard might be at once opened for breaking road stone instead of waiting until the usual period of the year. The suggestion was unanimously approved, and upon the proposition of the Mayor, seconded by Alderman Cox, it was resolved to adopt it, the details being left in the hands of the Chairman of the Sanitary and Highways Committee and the Borough Surveyor." The yard was opened on the 19th instant, and with the exception of two days has since been continually kept open, 13 men being employed. The Council usually employ about 40 men, and they have been constantly employed, principally in looking after water mains and pipes and in distributing water in carts in those streets in which the frost interfered with the supply. Several unemployed men, perhaps 40, have picked up a livelihood upon the frozen river. By voluntary agency.—A soup kitchen entirely supported by voluntary contributions of cash and provisions is, in severe weather, usually kept going at the Town Hall. This year it was opened on the 9th January, and usually three distributions are made in every week, the number of distributions to the present time being 19. During the week ended 16th February there were three distributions, at each of which between 300 and 320 families were supplied with soup and bread. It is considered that the families included over 1,200 persons. Two distributions of coal have been made to the same persons, one in the week ended February 12th, and another in the week ended February 26th, the total quantity distributed being about 50 tons. Councillor Pearce, out of a fund voluntarily given him, provides, upon the four days of the week upon which no soup distribution takes place, free and unlimited breakfasts to school children, the average attendance being 200.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

TAUNTON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 18,026. Rateable Value (1892-93), £76,130.

Letter from *T. Meyler*, Town Clerk, 26th February 1895.

AT the present time there is plenty of work in Taunton. There is a large asylum being erected at Cotford, within four miles of Taunton. The Great Western Railway have been for some time busily engaged in widening their line and enlarging their shed accommodation, and fresh works are about to be commenced. The Town Council have not yet completed the new street, and are carrying out extensive improvements in their recreation ground and in the new park. The weather has caused a cessation in these works; but a relief fund has been formed, and dinners for as many as 200 men have been provided; at present 20*l.* a day is being spent in this way, and in the soup kitchen tickets for coal are also freely distributed.

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* *See* note * on page 87.

Wilton Municipal Borough (Wilts).

Population (1891), 2,120. Rateable Value (1892-93), £8,837.

Letter from *H. J. King*, Town Clerk, 26th February 1895.

Although the severe weather has caused some distress, it has not been of an exceptional character. The factories here have kept their *employés* employed, and work for bricklayers, masons, &c., has been found by private residents. There has been no unemployed register maintained. Soup has been daily provided by private donations.

Wokingham Municipal Borough (Berks).

Population (1891), 3,254. Rateable Value (1892-93), £12,065.

Letter from *J. May*, Town Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. Beyond what is occasioned by the severity of the weather there is no exceptional distress in the district.

2. The Mayor has opened a relief fund for supplying coals and provisions to the unemployed and poor both in the Borough and Parish of Wokingham. The fund is under the control of a large and influential committee, which at first met twice a week and now meets weekly to relieve all cases found to be deserving, most of the applicants being personally known. About 100 in two days, the majority subsequently relieved being second applications.

3. An unemployed register has not been considered necessary.

4. The above is the only manner in which relief has been suggested. Many of those relieved have work to begin as soon as the weather permits. The Town Council has also work to be done immediately the frost disappears.

Yeovil Municipal Borough (Somerset).

Population (1891), 9,648. Rateable Value (1892-93), £34,989.

Letter from *S. Watts*, Mayor, 26th February 1895.

There is distress of an exceptional character in this town, arising partly from the severity of the weather and partly from the depression in the staple trade, the manufacture of gloves. This trade has been bad for more than a year past, many men being out of employment, and others on short time. Much of the glove-sewing is done by women at home, and thus the loss is keenly felt by the labouring classes in the town and neighbouring villages. Owing to the severe weather, masons, labourers, and others dependent on the building trades have had little or no work since Christmas last. This cause of distress is obviously only of a temporary nature.

The only steps being taken to relieve the distress have arisen out of a public meeting convened by the Mayor, in response to a requisition of the burgesses, held on 12th February, when a committee was formed to collect subscriptions and to take such steps as they deemed best for the relief of the sufferers. The town has been divided into districts, and the distributors keep a record of the cases relieved. The appeal for funds has received a generous and prompt response, about 400*l.* having been subscribed. Relief is being given in free tickets for coal, groceries, bread, and soup. The maximum amount allowed for each family is fixed at a money value of 7*s.* 6*d.* per week. For the two weeks ended respectively on the 16th and 23rd February, about 80*l.* per week have been expended, relieving about 450 families of those wholly or partially out of employment.

In view of the steps which are being taken, I have no suggestion to make for the purpose of relieving such distress.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Aberdare Urban District (Glamorgan).

Population (1891), 38,431. Assessable Value (1892-93), £131,578.

Letter from *T. Phillips*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. There is not any exceptional distress in this district, except to some slight extent in the case of builders' labourers, and others of that class.

2. The High Constable of the town formed a relief fund, and this has been sufficient to relieve all cases of urgency; and I am now informed there are sufficient funds in hand to meet any possible contingency for at least another fortnight, even assuming the frost continues. The average number relieved daily for the week ended 16th February, 19; average daily relief, 3*l.* 12*s.* 3*d.* All relief given in kind. The number of applicants for relief are decreasing.

3. No register of unemployed maintained.

4. No suggestion to make. If the weather breaks up there will be no necessity to make any special endeavour to obtain work for the unemployed, and the relief measures consequently will cease, and the distress be alleviated.

Barnard Castle Urban District (Durham).

Population (1891), 4,341. Assessable Value (1892–93), £11,843.

Letter from *J. I. Dawson*, Deputy Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. There is some exceptional distress, caused by the long-continued frost solely.

2. The public authorities are taking no exceptional means to meet the above distress, the Guardians granting relief in proper cases. There is a Poors' Charity Relief Committee, and this committee distributed to 283 families a quarter of a ton of coal each, and bread and flour, to some most needy cases on 25th January. A further distribution of coal and bread and flour was made on 11th February, and there has since been a third delivery of bread. The recipients were, in the majority, old people, and many in receipt of parish relief.

3. There is no register of unemployed.

4. The frost is the chief cause of the distress. Upon open weather coming, there will be work for all, except the chronic cases who never have work. This Council contemplate works of sewerage extension shortly, which will be the means of causing a demand for labour. The population of the district is about 4,000, and there are no works or manufactures of any moment. The district is agricultural.

Bedwellty Urban District (Monmouth).

Population (1891), 6,773. Assessable Value (1892–93) £20,712.

Letter from *J. A. Shepard*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

The Council are of opinion that there is no exceptional distress in the district calling for their special attention. The Chairman has, therefore, no suggestion to make with regard to this matter.

Chadderton Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 22,087. Assessable Value (1892–93), £84,521.

Letter from *G. Taylor*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in this district, caused by the severe weather.
2. Hence no measures of relief taken.
3. Nor an unemployed register kept.
4. I have no suggestions to make.

Cromer Urban District (Norfolk).

Population (1891), 2,197. Assessable Value (1892–93), £10,580.

Letter from *F. E. Hansell*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

There is no exceptional distress in this district arising from want of employment, and no steps by our public authorities or by voluntary agencies have been considered necessary.

A certain number of men in the building trade were thrown out of employment by the severe weather, but with the breaking-up of the frost there is no lack of employment in the district.

Eccleshill Urban District (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 7,928. Assessable Value (1892–93), £23,171.

Letter from *J. Richardson*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

Herewith I send you a copy of a letter I have received from the secretary to the Eccleshill Labour Club in reply to a copy of your Circular Letter on this matter, which I forwarded to them.

(Letter above referred to).

23 February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in the district, due to depression in trade, coupled with the severe weather.

2. Nothing done by public authorities. Private philanthropy has tried to grapple with it, but are unable to do it sufficiently. Cannot give number relieved.

3. No unemployed register maintained. We are in favour of every public body keeping one.

4. Compulsory enactment of the Parish Council Act.

(signed) *T. Proctor.*

ERITH URBAN DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 13,414. Assessable Value (1892-93), £64,206.

Letter from *F. Parish*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. THERE has been, and is, no exceptional distress in this district.

2. The Council have employed as many of the unemployed as possible during the recent severe weather to cleanse the roads and paths, and to break stones for use on roads; and a street improvement will at once be carried out to provide further work. Soup kitchens have also been opened by voluntary agencies, and the average number relieved by these agencies was 190 during the week ended Saturday, the 16th instant.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. The Council have no suggestion to make for relieving distress, having regard to the above Replies 1 and 2.

FINEDON URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 3,197. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *T. J. Morgan*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

THERE is no distress coming under the classes enumerated in your Circular so far as the parish of Finedon is concerned; the severe frost has caused some slight and temporary distress, which the inhabitants have provided for by temporary relief.

GRASMERE URBAN DISTRICT (WESTMORLAND).

Population (1891), 1,016. Assessable Value (1892-93), £5,637.

Letter from *S. Read*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district of this Council, care being taken to provide work in various ways for those out of employment.

HEAGE URBAN DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 2,490. Assessable Value (1892-93), £4,321.

Letter from *J. Barlow*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

As this is a colliery district, the people are fairly well employed.

LITTLEHAMPTON URBAN DISTRICT (WEST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 4,452. Assessable Value (1892–93), £21,395.

Letter from *J. Robinson*, Chairman, 26th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

MORECAMBE URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 6,476. Assessable Value (1892–93), £41,089.

Letter from *J. Lee*, Chairman, 26th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the district, which is due to the severe weather and scarcity of fish in the bay.

2. The Church and Nonconformist people, jointly, have opened a soup kitchen, and between 200 and 300 quarts with 1½lb. loaf with each quart is daily distributed to those in need.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The Council have applied to the Local Government Board for power to borrow a temporary loan of 5,436*l.* for works of private street improvements (in 16 streets), and they desire to have the Board's consent as soon as possible so as to find work for the unemployed.

PEMBERTON URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 18,400. Assessable Value (1892–93), £43,955.

Letter from *P. Partington*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress, due to severe weather and depressed mining industry. The mines are overstocked with men, several having been closed lately.

2. The Local Authority have kept all their regular staff of men (about 40) fully employed, and have ordered works for about 20 extra, which will last about a fortnight. A relief committee, not connected with the local authority, though some members of the District Council are on it, has been formed. The number relieved for the week ended February 16th was 39. The funds in hand at the present time amount to 25*l.*, the largest donation (10*l.*) being from the Miners' Union.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. This local authority have, during the past 12 months, enlarged their sewage farm by about 100 acres, and added 10 men to their permanent staff. They can, however, go no further in water and sewerage works, having spent 100,000*l.* on the former and 30,000*l.* on the latter. They have a few private streets to make, but winter is an unsuitable time for this kind of work, especially a hard winter. The amount paid, moreover, in wages is but small proportionately to the entire cost. There is plenty of work to do in this locality in cleansing ditches and water-courses, and dry, hard weather like this is just the time to do it. Hundreds of thousands of tons of fairly good fertilising material might be got and placed upon the adjoining lands. A double object would thus be gained by one effort, namely, the drainage as well as the tillage of the land.

PENRITH URBAN DISTRICT (CUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 8,981. Assessable Value (1892–93), £32,379.

Letter from *G. Wainwright*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. THERE is unexceptional distress owing to severe weather, stagnation in building trade, and depression in agriculture, which brings many unemployed farm servants and labourers into town.

2. Up to 16th February no relief works by local authorities. Public relief committees distributed coal and bread to about 300 families once a week, and dinner for about 350 poor children six days a week.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. Some 20 men extra now employed for two or three days at a time cleaning streets. No further suggestions can be made than relief already adopted, but recurrence of depression in agriculture in this district would be greatly reduced by a system of light railways.

PORTLAND URBAN DISTRICT (DORSET).

Population (1891), 9,443. Assessable Value (1892–93), £19,020.

Letter from *J. H. Bowen*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

I BEG to give you such information as I have been able to gather from the secretaries of the two relief committees recently started during the severe weather. I would say that the committees are appointed by voluntary efforts, and to distribute voluntary subscriptions only, and submit the following answers to your printed questions, categorically.

1. The distress for a few weeks from the end of January till the present time has been exceptional, but merely arises from the severe weather, which has practically prohibited the carrying on of the staple industry (stone-quarrying and sawing) since the 1st January.

2. Nothing is being done by the public authorities except the ordinary relief of the Union. The two committees named above—one Uphill and the other Underhill—are the only two voluntary agencies at work. These committees have each collected and distributed about 25*l.* to 30*l.* in coals, bread, and groceries. The Underhill Committee, in the week ended the 16th February, relieved 121 persons in the manner named. The Uphill Committee in the same period relieved 140 persons in the same manner.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. The efforts named are considered fully sufficient to meet the distress, which will now improve every day since the frost has broken and the men are commencing to work.

RAWDON URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,077. Assessable Value (1892–93), £11,601.

Letter from *H. Wolmsley*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. THE distress is due to the severe weather.

2. What has been done to meet the distress has been done by voluntary agencies. About 30 had been relieved the week ended the 16th February. More were relieved last week.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. The Council directed the Surveyor to employ extra men for cleansing footpaths and channels, and to select men from those who had no employment.

Rugeley Urban District (Stafford).

Population (1891), 4,181. Assessable Value (1892-93), £8,217.

Letter from *W. Hislop*, Chairman, 25th February 1895.

1. There has not been many bad cases of distress in this district. Twelve boats are frozen up, a few men thrown out of work at tannery. Masons and their labourers, and a few agricultural labourers, mostly consist of the unemployed during the late frost.

2. A soup-kitchen was opened five weeks ago, and from 55 to 60 gallons of good soup has been distributed twice a week to 170 people, giving from two to four pints of soup to each ticket-holder, according to number in family. With the last two distributions two pounds of bread was also given with the soup; this is being done by subscription. There are other charitably disposed persons who have sent coal and other articles to the needy, so that the poor unemployed here are pretty well cared for.

3. There is no register kept of the unemployed, other than a book wherein the names of ticket-holders are entered and the quantity given to each.

4. There is nothing more required than is being done here.

Walker Urban District (Northumberland).

Population (1891), 11,341. Assessable Value (1892-93), £31,518.

Letter from *T. M. Sturgess*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. The distress in this district is much greater than usual, due to more men being out of employment in the shipbuilding and engineering departments, arising principally from the strike of moulders and pattern makers for over six months, and since the beginning of the year to the severe weather putting a stop to outside employment.

2. Free meals have been provided daily since 16th January to about 350 children whose parents are out of work, also shoes and stockings to about 60 children attending the day schools. In addition, soup, groceries, and other provisions have been given by three proprietors of hotels in Walker to about 400 of the families of the unemployed three to four days each week for the last six weeks. One of the hotel proprietors also supplies bread to all applicants daily. This is all done by voluntary agencies.

3. No unemployed register has been kept this year, because the District Urban Council had no further extra work to carry out for the unemployed, having during the last two years dealt with extra work to the full extent of its power and requirements.

4. The suggestions for relieving such distress are:—1st. That workmen should, so far as possible, avoid strikes, which in the past have been a great loss to themselves, and to those in other branches dependent on them. 2nd. Owing to the frequent strikes and trade disputes as to demarcation of work, customers have in many instances gone to other districts for their requirements, and in other cases to the Continent, thereby diverting work that formerly came to the district. These together, with the competition of lower rates of wages in other districts, have doubtless tended lately to a reduction in the number of workmen employed in the shipbuilding and engineering trades, of which the most of the workmen in this district are employed.

Yeadon Urban District (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 7,396. Assessable Value (1892-93), £18,429.

Letter from *H. Walmsley*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. The trade in the district is not good, but most of the distress is caused by the severe weather.

2. Nothing has been done specially by the Council. Relief, however, has been given by voluntary agencies.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. The Surveyor has been directed to give employment to the unemployed for scavenging, &c.

Yeardsley-cum-Whaley Urban District (Chester).

Population (1891), 1,235. Assessable Value (1892-93), £4,375.

Letter from *C. F. Johnson*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this district, owing to the severity of the weather, but not to a very great extent.

2. Very little was done to relieve the distress during the week ended 16th February, but since that period some 200 loaves, and about 200 gallons of soup, have been distributed by voluntary agencies.

3. No register of the unemployed is kept.

4. No further remarks occur to the Chairman on the subject.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

Aysgarth Rural District (York, North Riding).

Population (1891), 4,736. Rateable Value (1892-93), £52,152.

Letter from *W. E. M. Winn*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. There has been some exceptional distress in the district, chiefly in the town of Hawes, due to the severe weather.

2. The distress has been met by voluntary agencies. I am not able to give the average daily number relieved by such agencies during the week ended Saturday, 16th February; but from what I can learn, there has been, in all, some 30 or 40 men and their families relieved.

3. No unemployed register is kept. The non-employment in general arose from the temporary closing of some stone quarries, owing to the severe frost, which the partial thaw has permitted to be re-opened.

4. No suggestions to make.

Bala Rural District (Merioneth).

Population (1891), 4,493. Rateable Value (1892-93), £31,217.

Letter from *J. R. Jones*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in this district, except what is due to the severe weather, preventing artizans and labourers from working.

2. Nothing has been done by the public authorities, except that the Guardians have employed a few men to get stone to the workhouse for the tramps to break.

I may add that the number of paupers in receipt of relief is less than it was this time last year.

Bromley Rural District (Kent).

Population (1891), 26,862. Rateable Value (1892-93), £205,126.

Letter from *R. G. Mullen*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. Undoubtedly there is exceptional distress in the district, partly due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, and partly to the severe weather, the peculiar circumstances being that a large number of labourers were brought into the district in consequence of very extensive works of sewerage, &c., &c., being carried out, and large estates having been laid out for building, &c.; and although this work is now either completed, or stopped by circumstances, a large proportion of the labourers have remained.

2. The public authorities have been able, with the aid of voluntary agencies, to cope with the distress. During the week ended 16th February about 100 men were employed by the Beckenham Urban District Council in cleansing roads and footpaths, &c., &c.; about the same number by the Bromley Urban District Council in similar work, and also in widening a public road. The Rural District Council employed a few additional men in cleansing the highways, and, with the Guardians, opened five wood-chopping yards, in which 386 men were employed during the week ended 16th instant. The voluntary agencies provide a hot meal each day for the men working in the labour yards, and free dinners for the children; but there are so many charitable societies, &c., in the district that it is impossible to give even an approximate estimate of the number relieved by them. Voluntary agencies in the Cray Valley parishes also employed a number of men in cleansing, repairing, and making up footpaths from the villages to the railway stations and across fields, &c.

3. No unemployed register has yet been kept.

4. The Council have no suggestion to make, as they are of opinion that the steps taken in this district have up to the present been sufficient to meet the circumstances.

Carlisle Rural District (Cumberland).

Population (1891), 16,009. Rateable Value (1892-93), £138,904.

Letter from *H. B. Lonsdale*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. There has been no exceptional distress in the district, except of a temporary nature caused by the severity of the weather.

2. The public authorities have not found it necessary to take action.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained in the district.

Chipping Sodbury Rural District (Gloucester).

Population (1891), 16,795. Rateable Value (1892–93), £112,646.

Letter from *J. D. B. Trenfield*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. The exceptional distress in this district is not great ; what there is is due to the severe weather.

2. The Board of Guardians have had a few applications from able-bodied men out of work for relief, and work has been offered them, viz., breaking limestone to the size of road stone at 1*s.* per yard, but not one of them has availed himself of the chance to earn money. The nobility, clergy, gentry, and others have liberally subscribed towards the supply of coal, soup, bread, and other things, in places where needed.

3. No unemployed register has been kept.

4. It is believed that immediately the weather changes the unemployed in this district will be able to find work again.

Clun Rural District (Salop).

Population (1891), 7,459. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *H. S. Newill*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. Any exceptional distress has been met by the exceptional activity of private charity. No exceptional demands for assistance have been made to the Relieving Officers.

2. There are no agencies in this district of the nature indicated by this question.

3. There is no necessity for an unemployed register.

Durham Rural District (Durham).

Population (1891), ——. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *A. Shafto*, Chairman, 26th February 1895.

1. There has not been any exceptional distress in this district.

2. The labour is derived from the mines and agriculture, and the men have been fully employed during the late hard weather.

Freebridge Lynn Rural District (Norfolk).

Population (1891), 12,251. Rateable Value (1892–93), £76,874.

Letter from *G. B. Ffolkes*, Chairman, 26th February 1895.

I beg to enclose you copy of a report by the Relieving Officer of this Union, giving his replies *seriatim* to the inquiries propounded in your Circular.

It does not occur to me that I can usefully offer any remarks to the statements in the report.

(Report of Relieving Officer above referred to).

1. There is no exceptional distress in the district. In the large parishes, namely, Castleacre, Grimstone, and Middleton, several agricultural labourers have been out of employ owing to the recent severity of the weather; eight men and one woman from the Parish of Grimstone applied to the Guardians for relief, through inability to obtain employment on account of the severity of the weather, and these are the only applications made to the Guardians by the unemployed.

2. Local voluntary subscriptions have been raised in the Parishes of Castleacre and Middleton, and persons temporarily relieved by a committee appointed by the subscribers, with coals, bread, and groceries, each according to the number of their families; and at Grimstone coals were given away and a soup kitchen opened ; at Gayton, and some other parishes in the district, money and coals were given away by owners of property and large occupiers.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. It is hoped, now that the frost has broken up, and the weather become more genial, employment will be forthcoming for all the industrious working population.

GODSTONE RURAL DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 22,117. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *E. A. Head*, Clerk, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE has been a good deal of distress in the district, owing to the severe weather.

2. The distress has been met by odd work being found for the out-of-employ as far as possible, and voluntary effort has done much to relieve it in the different villages. Extra work has also been found in connection with the highways.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. There is plenty of work directly the frost breaks. There are extensive building operations going on in the district, but the severe frost has stopped all such operations and work generally.

HARTSHORNE AND MEASHAM RURAL DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 7,118. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *G. Farmer*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. THE Council have not heard of there being any exceptional distress in their district. A number of bricklayers and labourers have been thrown out of employment by the frost, but these are now resuming work.

2. The Council are not aware of any organised voluntary agencies having been formed. Private individuals have assisted needy cases.

3. An unemployed register is not kept.

4. If the severe weather does not return there will not be any exceptional distress.

LLANGYFELACH RURAL DISTRICT (GLAMORGAN).

Population (1891), 28,173. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *G. B. Haynes*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. AS regards the portion of this district which includes the parish and borough of Loughor, the parishes of Llandilotalybont, and Cockett, there is no exceptional distress; but as regards the parishes of Clase Rural (Morriston), Penderry, and Llansamlet Higher, there is great distress from stoppage of works, and in consequence of the frost the canal traffic has been stopped, causing great distress in the parish of Llansamlet Lower.

2. Numerous voluntary agencies are doing much to meet the distress at Morriston, Treboth, and Skelly, but no steps have been taken by any public authority.

3. No registry of unemployed has been opened.

4. The County Council having postponed the operation of Section 25 (Sub-Section 1) of the Local Government Act 1894, until 31st March next, the District Council has no power as to footpaths or new roads until April next, but it has directed the matter to be placed forthwith before the Highway Board and other authorities.

I am also to state that a special meeting of the Council has been summoned for Saturday next, to further consider the subject, and that a supplemental reply will be forwarded to you.

LUDLOW RURAL DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 10,818. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *R. G. Venables*, Chairman, 26th February 1895.

1. THERE has been but little exceptional distress in the Ludlow Rural District. Such distress as there has been is due to the fact of this being, for the greater part, an agricultural district, and through work on the land being completely stopped owing to the severe weather.

2. A relief fund has been started in the borough of Ludlow, and cases in the adjoining parishes of East Hamlet and Ludford have been relieved from this fund.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. It is believed that as soon as the usual agricultural work re commences any exceptional distress will disappear.

Marlborough Rural District (Wilts).

Population (1891), 5,494. Rateable Value (1892-93), £ 30,703.

Letter from *E. Gwillim*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

There does not appear to be any exceptional distress in this district, and the usual sources of relief are sufficient to meet any ordinary cases of distress arising from lack of employment during the late severe weather.

Nantwich Rural District (Chester).

Population (1891), 22,903. Rateable Value (1892-93), £243,127.

Letter from *C. E. Speakman*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this district, which is mainly due to the severe weather.
2. Public subscriptions are being raised and distributed by private persons.
3. No register of unemployed is kept.
4. The Board have no suggestion to make for the purpose of relieving such distress.

Newtown and Llanidloes Rural District (Montgomery).

Population (1891), 12,538. Rateable Value (1892-93), £79,211.

Letter from *J. Lewis*, Chairman, 23rd February 1895.

The 15 parishes comprising this district are entirely agricultural, in which there is a great lack of labourers, consequently there is no unemployed save a very small sprinkling of "job men," who are very few in the whole of the district, and whose work is only suspended just now owing to the severity of the weather, and amongst whom there is no distress, as nearly all of them have land and keep a cow or two.

I regret to learn that there are so many unemployed, and consequently starving poor in the towns while the agricultural districts are so short of labourers, a state of things which should be remedied by offering facilities to induce and encourage labourers to return to the land, such as erecting cottages and giving them suitable allotments. I know of hundreds of farms in this district, varying from 80 to 200 acres, without a single labourer's cottage thereon, consequently farmers have to engage unmarried men and boys, who have to board and lodge in the farmhouse, and even these are so scarce that farmers have to go from town to town at the annual hiring season to get their supply with difficulty and at a very high wage. I am of opinion that the farmer should be placed in a better position to employ labour, and thereby to draw some of the starving multitudes from the towns back to the land again to reclaim the uncultivated areas, relieve the ratepayers, and save the agricultural industry from ruin.

Orsett Rural District (Essex).

Population (1891), 15,091. Rateable Value (1892-93), £80,184.

Letter from *G. W. Squier*, Chairman, 26th February 1895.

I beg to enclose report from the Relieving Officer of this district, giving particulars of the way in which the distress consequent on the hard weather and want of employment has been met. It chiefly refers to Grays and similarly situated industrial centres. In the Rural Districts there has been little, if any, need for exceptional effort. I may add that at the last meeting of the Board of Guardians there were but very few, if any, applications for relief traceable to want of employment.

(Report of Relieving Officer above referred to).

The distress in this district has been exceptional, and mainly due to the severe weather.

To meet this distress the labour yard at the Orsett Union has been opened, and for the week ended the 16th instant five men were employed there (five others having been sent there since). The Urban District Council of Grays expended between 40*l.* and 50*l.* engaging the unemployed on the roads. At Grays the undermentioned voluntary agencies are in working order and distributing as under: Mr. Cottis, member of the Grays School Board, for the board dinners, say 50 children per day, or 300 for week ended 16th of February. Co-operative Stores, 1,000 per day, 7,000 for week ended 16th of February. Soup and bread, representing 200 families, averaging five each. Rev F. Haslock, about 900, or 150 families, averaging six each (groceries, bread, coals, and soup). Rev. A. H. Dealafield, about 700 persons a week (groceries, bread, coals, and money). Primitive Methodist Chapel, 1,800 persons a week (soup and bread). Salvation Army, about 100 persons a week (soup and bread, and also sell soup at a reduced rate). Rev. T. Doyle (R.C.), 60 to 70 children per day, or about 400 a week, soup and bread, and in addition relieves 12 families with grocery, money, and soup. Wesleyan Chapel, money and charity tickets, number not known. Baptist Chapel, about 600 a week (soup and bread). Football Charity Cup Committee, 960 6*d.* tickets and 480 2*d.* tickets, amounting to 28*l.*, handed over to above agencies. Congregational Chapel and Nonconformist Council, no system, but relieve individually. All the above are in Grays, in addition to which at the Wesleyan Chapel, Little Thurrock, about 50 persons per week are relieved with money, soup, and a free breakfast. At Tilbury and South Ockenden soup and bread have been distributed, but I cannot give numbers.

PEMBROKE RURAL DISTRICT (PEMBROKE).

Population (1891), 11,687. Rateable Value (1892-93), £64,442.

Letter from *N. A. Roch*, Chairman, 26th February 1895.

THE District Council consider that the exceptional distress in the district is to be attributed to the severe weather, and that it is not found necessary to organise any scheme of extraordinary relief.

PETERSFIELD RURAL DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON AND WEST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 8,801. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. R. Shield*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. THERE is no distress in the district beyond what is usual at this time of the year, which, therefore, is not exceptional.

2. For the past two weeks what little distress there has been has been amply met by voluntary subscriptions in the way of a soup kitchen, but even the numbers applying for relief in that way have greatly fallen off.

3. An unemployed register is not kept.

4. Subject to my answers above, you will see that no suggestion for further relief is needed.

SWAFFHAM RURAL DISTRICT (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 8,757. Rateable Value (1892-93), £62,527.

Letter from *A. A. Young*, Chairman, 25th February 1895.

1. IN some parishes in the Rural District there is exceptional distress, which may be attributed, to some extent, to the severe weather, but probably more to the extremely low price of agricultural produce.

2. Nothing has been done by public authorities or voluntary agencies to meet it beyond private charity.

3. There is not any register of unemployed kept.

TEME RURAL DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 1,870. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. H. Brown*, Chairman, 25th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district other than that arising from the exceptionally severe weather.

2. Public authorities have not deemed it necessary to intervene, because the greater part of the distress has been met by private charity, the population of the district being sparse.

3. No unemployed register has been kept.

THRAPSTON RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON AND HUNTINGDON).

Population (1891), 14,582. Rateable Value (1892-93), £69,556.

Letter from *G. Hunnybun*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

WELLINGBOROUGH RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 15,295. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *W. Jackson*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

THERE is not any very exceptional distress in the district of the Council, and whatever distress of an exceptional character there may have been during the past winter has been met through the ordinary medium of Poor Law relief and by voluntary effort. No application from the unemployed has been made to this Council, and consequently no unemployed register has been maintained.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

Chelsea Parish.

Population (1891), 96,253. Rateable Value (1892–93), £712,515.

Letter from *T. Holland*, Vestry Clerk, 27th February 1895.

1. As far as can be ascertained, the exceptional distress in the parish is largely owing to the recent severe weather.

2. Since the 22nd January the Vestry have expended a sum exceeding 1,800*l.* in removing snow, thereby giving temporary employment to a large number of men, as many as 815 having been engaged on one occasion. The four local benevolent societies, each of which has a separate district in the parish, also relieve many cases of distress, and during the last few weeks their efforts and expenditure have been practically doubled.

3. All persons out of employment may have their names registered at the Labour Bureau established by the Vestry at the Town Hall.

4. The Local Government Board be asked to allow any extra cost incurred by work being carried out at adverse seasons of the year to be thrown upon the Common Poor Fund, instead of the whole cost having to be borne by the local parochial rates as at present.

Lee District Board of Works.

Population (1891), 36,103. Rateable Value (1892–93), £275,145.

Letter from *G. Whale*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

1. The only parish in which there is any exceptional distress in this district is that of Charlton, where it is reported there has been greater distress than usual "owing to several of the works on the riverside being compelled to close on account of the frozen state of the river."

2. Throughout the whole of the district extra employment, principally in clearing the snow from the roads and footpaths, has been afforded to a large number of unemployed.

3. A register has been kept for the Parish of Charlton only, which does not appear to have been utilised by the workmen out of employment to any extent..

4. The Board is of opinion that with the return of favourable climatic conditions matters will resume their normal state.

St. Olave District Board of Works.

Population (1891), 12,723. Rateable Value (1892–93), £203,948.

Letter from *E. Bayley*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

1. There does not appear to be any exceptional distress in this district. There is, of course, always a certain amount of distress through illness, and inability from various causes to obtain employment, and this distress is naturally increased during the winter. Until, however, the recent severe frost set in, it is probable that there was less distress of this nature than usual during the winter season. The severe frost, however, naturally threw a large number out of employment, and, being prolonged, there is now some distress, but this may be regarded as temporary. Even making allowance for the present distress, I do not think the total amount is greater than, probably not so great, as usual. My reason for this opinion is special enquiries made yesterday in the Board and Roman Catholic schools in the district. The Board schools (Fair-street and Magdalen-street Schools) are mainly attended by children of artizans and better-class labourers. What little distress there is amongst them is due more to chronic than to temporary causes. The Roman Catholic schools are attended by children of waterside and other labourers not in constant employment. Here the distress is greater—probably more than last year, but only since the frost.

2. The Board gave directions early in the winter for as much paving work to be done during the winter as possible, and some of the works were done ; but, on the frost setting in, all such works had of necessity to be discontinued, and paving and sewer work could only be found for the men regularly employed by the Board. On the fall of snow, all the men who applied sufficiently early in the day were employed in its removal, and by this means work was found for 200 men. The Rev. R. E. Adderley, Rector of St. John's Parish (which contains the largest population of the district), arranged to provide dinners for men out of work at a charge of one penny, and a few weeks since he gave free dinners ; but his efforts were not appreciated, and there was so little demand for them that they were discontinued. In the Roman Catholic schools free dinners have been provided for as many children as need them. In the Board schools in the district no dinners have yet been given, though preparations have been made to commence as soon as required. It is now decided to provide 40 free dinners for three days a week, to commence at once. These will amply meet requirements. Snowsfields Board Schools, which is just outside the boundary of this district, takes some of the poorest of this district ; there free dinners have been given daily to 200 children for the last few weeks, and will continue till Easter.

3. An unemployed register is kept here in which the names of all persons applying are entered. The number of entries this winter is 36, of whom 11 do not belong to this district. Of those entering their names the Board has given employment to 13.

4. I think the form of relief least open to objection is free meals to school children, and for this ample provision is made.

I wish it to be understood that by this district I mean the parishes comprising the district of this Board. My remarks may be quite inapplicable to the locality immediately adjoining.

II.—COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Bradford County Borough.

Population (1891), 216,361. Rateable Value (1892–93), £1,065,955.

Letter from *W. T. McGowen*, Town Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. There is, undoubtedly, much distress amongst the working class in this town, occasioned largely by the prolonged severity of the weather, which has put a stop to out-door work.

2. With a view to affording relief to necessitous persons, the Mayor has opened a subscription list, which, up to yesterday evening, realised 1,743*l.* 11*s.* 5*d.* The funds so contributed are being administered by a central committee, who have formed a sub-committee in connection with each of the 15 wards of the borough to distribute the relief, working in concert with the various existing charitable organisations, so as to prevent overlapping. The average number of families relieved per day by these sub-committees during the week ended 16th instant would be about 500. Before the Mayor opened his subscription list the proprietors of the leading newspaper in the borough (the "Bradford Observer") began publishing subscriptions sent to them, and the amount thus raised has been 753*l.* 10*s.* 9*d.*, which has been handed over to the Charity Organisation Society and the Cinderella Club. The Bradford Cinderella Club, an organisation which is maintained for supplying free meals to poor children, during the week in question, provided about 1,100 such meals per day. The Bradford Charity Organisation Society, during the period above named, afforded relief to about 100 persons daily. The Bradford Coffee Tavern Company, Limited, who are supplying special cheap meals at 1*d.* per head, served about 3,000 of such meals per day during the week in question. The Bradford Poor Law Guardians, during the said week, granted on an average per day test relief in about 268 cases, and out-door relief in about 600 cases. In addition to the above organisations, there are in the town numerous soup-kitchens and other charitable agencies for supplying food to the needy, of which no particulars can readily be given. There is evidently a wide-spread feeling of kindness on the part of numerous householders in the town, which has induced them to supply food and clothing to many poor persons, as to which no account can be given, the work being carried out without ostentation. The Corporation have found employment, in the removal of snow, for a large number of out-door labourers, but such work is, of course, only of a temporary character, and cannot be undertaken by workers of every kind. The Corporation have also put in hand the formation of a new road, named Cliffe Lane, which will cost about 1,200*l.* in wages, and which is giving employment to about 450 workpeople, who are working two days per week in three shifts, but the work cannot last many weeks.

3. No unemployed register has been opened in the present case. In the winter of 1892-93 such a register was in operation here, but it was found to be of no practical value, as very few employers of labour availed themselves of the opportunity to engage workpeople, and by far the greater number of those registered would seem to have offered themselves for registration because slight pecuniary relief was, in some cases, being granted to the more needy applicants.

4. As it would appear, from statements made by a deputation from the Bradford Poor Law Guardians, who waited upon the finance and general purposes committee of the Bradford Town Council on the 11th instant, with the view of seeking the aid of the Corporation in affording relief to the unemployed people in the town, that many burgesses who are in distress will not seek relief from the Poor Law authorities owing to the disfranchisement thereby entailed, it is therefore submitted that an alteration of the existing law is imperative, so as to remove the odium which at present attaches to poor but deserving people in seeking parish relief. I think it right to add that the voluntary agencies above referred to in Paragraph 2 are still in operation, except that of the publishers of the "Bradford Observer," who have asked their subscribers to make remittances to the Mayor's fund.

Chester County Borough.

Population (1891), 37,105. Rateable Value (1892-93), £167,700.

Letter from *S. Smith*, Town Clerk, 27th February 1895.

1. The only exceptional distress here is due to the recent severe weather.

2. The distress has been well and fully met by special employment by the Corporation and by benevolent agencies.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained, or thought to be necessary.

4. No suggestions are considered to be required here.

Leeds County Borough.

Population (1891), 367,505. Rateable Value (1892-93), £1,305,492.

Letter from *P. Gilston*, Mayor, 27th February 1895.

As promised in my letter to you of yesterday, I now give you the facts in regard to the doings of this Corporation in finding work for the unemployed from December 1892 to the present date.

1892-93.

A Labour Bureau was opened by the Corporation under the superintendence of Mr. Freeman, of the City Engineer's Office, on the 12th December 1892, for the registration of unemployed, and was closed on the 15th March 1893. During that time 1,874 persons were entered. The following is an epitome of the register :—

Names of Wards.	Out-door Labourers.	In-door Labourers.	Woollen Trade.	Iron Trade.	Leather Trade.	Miners.	Painters.	Brick-layers and Masons.	Sundry.	Total.
Millstill	7	–	1	1	1	–	–	–	2	12
West	57	24	24	45	6	–	13	–	21	190
Brunswick	11	1	–	4	6	–	5	–	9	36
Central	53	4	8	13	2	1	6	–	26	113
North	25	7	5	19	7	2	8	3	11	87
North-East	120	14	7	29	21	4	10	2	34	241
East	187	24	22	71	12	6	13	5	41	381
South	54	12	4	31	–	1	9	–	17	128
East Hunslet	44	13	–	34	1	–	2	–	9	103
Holbeck	50	13	9	75	2	1	6	–	16	172
New Wortley	29	9	3	27	1	2	3	–	4	78
Armley and Wortley	35	8	5	19	3	2	2	1	5	80
Bramley	5	1	3	–	–	1	–	1	9	20
Headingley	34	7	3	13	3	–	6	–	4	70
North-West	38	7	4	13	6	–	9	–	7	84
West Hunslet	29	5	2	29	2	–	4	–	8	79
Total	778	149	100	423	73	20	96	12	223	1,874

Of this number 1,104 persons received tickets for work at the various parks and recreation grounds of the Corporation.

Particulars of this employment are as follow at the time the bureau was closed. Of course, alterations were made later.

Names of Wards.	Pasture Hills	East End Park.	Cross Flatts.	Kirkstall Abbey.	Hunslet Moor.	Wood-house Moor.	Total.
Millstill	3	–	–	1	–	–	4
West	53	35	14	31	1	4	138
Brunswick	8	2	1	4	3	–	18
Central	14	20	3	4	11	–	52
North	1	21	–	6	7	–	35
North-East	26	92	1	8	19	2	148
East	18	156	–	–	31	2	207
South	6	3	20	1	42	–	72
East Hunslet	9	2	21	–	35	1	68
Holbeck	32	3	69	5	7	1	117
New Wortley	50	10	1	6	–	–	67
Armley and Wortley	45	4	–	6	–	2	57
Bramley	8	–	–	1	1	–	10
Headingley	13	12	–	22	–	–	47
North-West	8	9	–	7	–	–	24
West Hunslet	6	1	16	–	17	–	40
Total	300	370	146	102	174	12	1,104

In selecting these persons the order was as follows : 1. Married men with families and no income whatever. 2. Married men with families and small income. 3. Widowers with families. 4. Single men.

The men were employed in shifts of three days each.

The average income of each man was 11*s.* 3*d.* for the three days. The number of men employed on each shift varied as the work progressed, and as the men obtained regular employment. As thus vacancies occurred they were filled up as occasion required from the other names on the register. As spring and summer advanced the number of men working gradually decreased, partly owing to the men obtaining other employment, but chiefly owing to the works of the Corporation being finished. The works of the Corporation consisted of the laying out of public parks and

and excavating and levelling works. The highest number of men working on one shift, spread over the various works, was 370, and on the other shift 354; total, 724 men. In addition to the 1,104 men who received work tickets as before stated, 136 additional men were employed from time to time on the various works, making a total of 1,240. The remaining 634 men were rejected partly on account of their being single men, but chiefly for other reasons.

1893-94-95.

On 16th January 1894, a labour bureau was again opened by the Corporation, and closed on 10th June 1894. During this six months, 2,486 persons were registered, as follows:—

Names of Wards.	Out-door Labourers.	In-door Labourers.	Woollen Makers.	Iron Workers.	Leather Workers.	Miners.	Painters.	Brick-layers and Masons.	Sundry.	Total.
East	97	149	40	61	25	1	6	3	31	413
North-East	98	89	34	54	21	3	12	5	24	340
Holbeck	41	63	7	105	6	2	4	2	19	249
North	37	40	14	24	12	–	6	–	9	142
South	37	50	8	49	4	–	2	1	17	168
West	46	62	27	55	14	–	12	2	26	244
East Hunslet	22	41	1	47	1	–	–	1	10	123
West Hunslet	19	38	6	42	1	1	5	1	11	124
North-West	29	30	12	12	10	–	8	2	14	117
Central	33	20	6	17	10	–	–	–	8	94
Brunswick	20	19	3	6	7	–	1	1	16	73
Mill Hill	5	7	1	3	2	–	1	–	3	22
Bramley	54	20	15	17	5	1	3	–	2	117
Headingley	14	20	7	14	2	–	4	1	12	74
Armley and Wortley	17	17	10	23	6	–	3	–	8	84
New Wortley	15	28	5	35	2	1	2	1	13	102
Total	584	693	196	564	128	9	69	20	223	2,486

Of this number 1,665 persons received tickets for work at the various places provided by the Corporation, as set forth below.

Statement as to Number of Men employed at the various Works provided by the Corporation.

Name of Ward.	Princes Avenue to Canal Gardens, Excavating, &c.	Sports Ground, Levelling.	Kitson-road, making New Road.	Harehills-road, Widening.	East End Park, Levelling.	Kirkstall Abbey, Laying-out.	Stanningley Park, Laying-out.	Oak-road Recreation Ground, Laying-out.	Pasture Hills New Park, Laying-out.	Upper Lake, re-ducing Depth for Skating purposes.	Total.
Mill-hill	5	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	7
West	29	36	15	4	1	7	55	7	2	5	161
Brunswick	20	8	3	1	–	1	–	–	–	–	33
Central	11	10	32	1	4	–	–	–	–	1	59
North	55	25	9	7	3	1	–	–	–	3	103
North East	59	52	69	14	8	2		–	1	30	235
East	71	65	74	10	16	–	–	–	1	33	276
South	29	37	37	4	–	1	–	1	–	6	115
East Hunslet	24	19	7	–	–	–	20		–	–	70
Holbeck	56	28	2	3	–	2	59	6	–	1	157
New Wortley	17	21	2	1	–	3	22	15	1	–	84
Armley and Wortley	10	14	2	–	–	–	29	9	2	2	68
Bramley	2	–	1	–	–	1	91	1	–	–	96
Headingley	5	7	–	2	–	2	27	5	1	1	50
North West	43	12	18	1	–	3	–	–	–	1	78
West Hunslet	26	19	21	1	–	1	3	1	–	–	72
Total	462	354	293	49	32	24	365	45	[illegible]	72	1,[illegible]5

In selecting these persons the same routine was adopted as in 1892–93. The men were employed in shifts of three days each. The average income of each man was 11*s.* 3*d.* for the three days. The number of men engaged on each shift varied as the work progressed, and as the men found other employment. As the spring and summer advanced

advanced the number of men working gradually decreased, partly owing to the men finding other employment, but chiefly owing to the works of the Corporation being finished. The works provided by the Corporation consisted of the laying out of public parks; the construction of a new public sports ground; and the excavating and filling up for a new road to public park. The highest number of men working on one shift spread over the various works was 444, and on the other shift 502, total, 946 men. In addition to the 1,665 men employed as shown before 100 additional men were engaged from time to time on the various works. The number of men employed at Princes Avenue, Roundhay Park, on the last two shifts, before the severe weather came in, was 50 and 47 respectively, total 97. This modifies the statement of yesterday that 140 were employed. The remaining 721 men, out of the register of 2,486, were rejected, partly on account of their being single men, but chiefly for other reasons.

The following is a statement of the moneys expended by the Corporation in wages on the unemployed from 14th December 1892, to 20th February 1895:

Corporate Property Committee.—From week ended 14th December 1892, to week ended 27th December 1893, 12,084*l.* 13*s.* 8*d.* From week ended 3rd January 1894, to week ended 20th February 1895, 13,895*l.* 2*s.* 11*d.* Scavenging Department (Removing Snow).—Winter 1892-93, 283*l.* 16*s.* 7*d.*; Winter 1893-94, 258*l.* 7*s.*; Winter 1894-95, 821*l.* 7*s.* 9*d.* Highways Department (Removing Snow).—Winter 1893, 95*l.* 13*s.* 7*d.*; Winter 1894, 148*l.* 9*s.* 4*d.*; Winter 1895, 601*l.* 17*s.* 8*d.*; total 28,189*l.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

I should add that at a meeting of the Corporate Property Committee yesterday the following resolution was passed:—The engineer having explained that the difficulties in the way of proceeding with the formation of the road at Roundhay Park connected with Mr. Kitson's boundary wall had been removed: Resolved, "That the "forming of the road be resumed forthwith, and that it be an instruction to the engineer that no man be employed "who has not resided in the city for a period of six months, and that no employment to one man be for more than "two days per week, or for a longer period than two months."

Newport County Borough.

Population (1891), 54,707. Rateable Value (1892–93), £251,091.

Letter from *J. C. Sanders*, Mayor, 26th February 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this district, due to the severe weather.

2. The Corporation have, in combination with land-owners, arranged the construction of some road-making works. During last week 300 men were employed on these works. During the week ended Saturday the 16th instant, the works had not been commenced, and no men had been employed.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. The only suggestion that I can offer is, that in these cases the local authorities should have greater, if not absolute discretion as to the undertaking of relief works. In this particular case, if the ordinary and proper rule had been followed, the Corporation ought, perhaps, to have applied to the Local Government Board for their sanction, and to have submitted plans, sections, and estimates for approval, all of which would have entailed considerable delay, and practically made the works unavailing for the relief of men temporarily unemployed.

Worcester County Borough.

Population (1891), 42,908. Rateable Value (1892–93), £168,178.

Letter from *Hon. A. Percy Allsopp*, Mayor, 26th February 1895.

1. There is no doubt that the distress in Worcester during this winter has been of an exceptional character, due, in some measure, to slackness of trade in two of the principal industries of the town—viz., the manufactures of porcelain and gloves; but the greater portion is attributable to the unusual severity of the weather.

2. I presume that you already possess information as to what has been done to meet the distress by the Board of Guardians, so that it is only necessary for me to state what has been done by the Corporation and by voluntary effort. Numbers of men were employed in clearing away the snow at a low rate of wage, and the stone-yards were thrown open, and men were employed in breaking stone, but this is, of course, labour of a kind at which it is almost impossible for any except the hardiest and most expert to earn anything like a reasonable amount. Since the year commenced, the Victoria Relief Fund has been the means of distributing 500*l.* in kind. The number of persons applying for relief from this fund between the 12th January and the 15th February was 837. After careful investigation, relief was granted during the week ended 16th February to 588 persons, at a cost of 96*l.*; the amount given being at the rate of 2*s.* for each married couple, and 6*d.* for each child under 14, up to 5*s.*, which is the maximum. By means of the Prince of Wales' Coal Fund, 900 tons of coal have this winter been distributed, in single cwts., to the necessitous poor of the city, during the severe weather, at a charge of 4*d.* per cwt. During the week ended 16th February the Victoria Soup Kitchens were the means of supplying 5,214 persons with soup at 1*d.* per quart, but many obtain the soup by means of penny and halfpenny tickets given to them by charitably-disposed persons.

3. Early in December last, by my directions, in response to a representative committee appointed at a meeting of the unemployed, a list of men was prepared, giving the names and addresses and trades of about 70 applicants, and I wrote to the local papers informing them what I had done, and requesting employers who might be in want of workmen to communicate with me. Nothing resulted. The matter was discussed with several employers of labour, but it was found that they experienced no difficulty in obtaining workmen when they wanted them.

4. It must be distinctly understood that the following views represent simply my own personal ideas. The usual methods of relieving distress by means of doles are unsatisfactory and degrading. The honest working man much prefers to receive employment, even at a wage much below the ordinary rate, and from my own experience, is really grateful. It seems to me that, until a better state of things arises, each winter must bring a certain amount of distress arising from lack of employment, especially amongst those classes who have no society to help them when they are thrown out of work in their usual occupations through the severity of the weather, and I think a great deal may be done by the exercise of a little forethought on the part of public authorities by making provision for carrying out works of a useful nature, which, though not required at the moment, soon become necessary owing to the increase of population and the more exacting tastes and desires of the people. At the same time, I should be sorry to see anything done which would act as a premium upon carelessness and improvidence during those months of the year when labour is in demand and wages are good. There is no doubt an indisposition on the part of public authorities to get work done by the unemployed, as it nearly always happens, as it has happened here, that work so done

done costs much more than when it is done by skilled labour; but if relief is not given in this way it will probably have to be given through the Poor Law, and in any case the ratepayer has to find the money. If, however, the Poor Law is invoked, the recipient of relief cannot avoid the stigma of pauperism, and every effort should be made to prevent a man losing his self-respect and independence. To my mind, it is the duty of the State to see that, as the capitalist has a right to his fair interest, so the labourer has an equal right to employment, at home or by emigration. If not irrelevant, I should like to add my opinion that the State should insist that every man should provide, year by year or month by month, a sum of money, to be supplemented from the National Exchequer, so as to enable him to obtain a decent pension when he becomes incapacitated from work, and to prevent his entering the workhouse or becoming the subject of charity.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Cheltenham Municipal Borough (Gloucester).

Population (1891), 42,914. Rateable Value (1892-93), £249,315.

Letter from *E. B. Wethered*, Mayor, 27th February 1895.

1. During a normal winter we always have in this town a number of men thrown out of employ. These consist of labourers, gardeners, and men connected with the building trade, including plasterers and painters, &c. The more severe the winter, the greater the number of men out of employ. Consequently, this year there have been a great many men "thrown out." We have in this town, as probably in most others, men who never will work if they can avoid it. Many of these live on what their wives earn, others live from hand to mouth as best they can. Men of this class always take advantage of any occasion to press their claims as "men out of work." One of the difficulties of relief to the unemployed is to select the deserving and ignore the impostors.

2. The Corporation of Cheltenham was in a position to offer work as follows:—Total number of men employed during the week ended 16th February last, 370. Work employed on: (1) removing soil from a sand pit to expose sand for future use; (2) repairing footpaths with clinker; (3) drainage of sewage farm; (4) supply of water to farm-house; (5) sewage mains to deliver sewage over a larger area than before: (6) removing an island in Public Park, to give greater facilities for boating; (7) sweeping ice for skaters. Total cost for that week, 312*l.* 10*s.* The men were paid 3*s.* a day. We believe in the principle of a fair wage. It has two advantages (i) we cannot insist on the work being properly done, and if it is not done properly the defaulting workman has to make way for one more worthy; (ii) the men value the employment, and hence a good return is obtained for the money expended in the form of works. This work, however, was suited only for labourers, and not for men unaccustomed to use a shovel—such as painters, plasterers, and masons. *Voluntary agencies.*—We started a public relief fund for persons out of employ. This was well responded to, and relief was given as follows: tickets for soup were placed in several of the shops. These were sold in book form of 12 for 1*s.*, *i.e.* 1*d.* each. The tickets were given away by the purchaser, and each recipient was, on presentation of the ticket at the soup-kitchen, entitled to a quart of soup and a quarter of a loaf of bread. The cost of this to the committee was 3*d.* The following figures show the number of tickets given in for the week ended 16th February:—10th February, 351; 11th February, 643; 12th February, 560; 13th February, 589; 14th February, 521; 15th February, 817; 16th February, 751; Total, 4,232. Further, the relief committee distributed tickets entitling the holder to 1*s.* worth of food or coal. For the week ended 16th February a daily average of 98 such tickets were given away at the discretion of a sub-committee, who was assisted by the police and a special inquiry agent. Beyond what I have stated, most of the churches and chapels in the town have given away relief chiefly in the form of soup. I have sent round a Circular, a copy of which is appended, to all the clergy and ministers in this town asking for information in answer to your Question, No. 2, but there does not appear, except in one case, to be reliable data kept on which to base a statement. This is greatly to be regretted.

I desire to add that my experience, in the matter of the unemployed, leaves no doubt that very great discretion is necessary.

(Circular above referred to).

I have received a Circular from the Local Government Board asking the following questions:—

1. "Whether there is any exceptional distress in the district, and how far this is due to circumstances peculiar to the locality or to the severe weather?"

2. "What is being done to meet the distress by public authorities or by voluntary agencies, and the average daily number relieved by each of the agencies during the week ended Saturday the 16th February?"

I should be glad if you would give me information as to any work done in your parish or by your congregation.

As the Circular is marked "urgent," I must have answers by Monday morning.

Ilkeston Municipal Borough (Derby).

Population (1891), 19,744. Rateable Value (1892-93), £55,890.

Letter from *W. Lissett*, Town Clerk, 27th February 1895.

Bricklayers, their labourers, brickmakers, and a few general labourers, have been thrown out of employment by the frost.

The Mayor has invited the aid of the charitably disposed, and who have the means, to grant relief to the needy. The response has been satisfactory, and a considerable portion of parties, all genuine cases known, have been supplied with tickets for food during the last three weeks. I may add, that although the burgesses of this borough, for the most part, are artizans and working men generally, yet, from the fact that many of them are employed at collieries, iron works, factories, &c., the severity of the winter has not effected such disastrous results here as in some places.

In the year 1893 an unemployed register was opened, and during the first four or five months of the year about 69 persons applied to have their names entered. No substantially beneficial results accrued to the applicants, and the new plan fell into desuetude.

The weather having somewhat improved, it is hoped the need of assistance will soon be extinguished.

LYME REGIS MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DORSET).

Population (1891), 2,365. Rateable Value (1892–93), £9,009.

Letter from *Z. Edwards*, late Mayor, 27th February 1895.

1. THERE is scarcely more distress in this district than we usually expect in the winter, and not more than we are able to cope with.

2. The Corporation have been finding such work as they can for the people in their employ. The soup-kitchen has been kept open three times a week during the severe weather, or, in cases of absolute necessity, gratis. Large distributions of coal have been made. The funds for both these last have been found by voluntary agency.

3. No unemployed register kept.

MOSSLEY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 14,162. Rateable Value (1892–93), £57,855.

Letter from *J. Hyde*, Town Clerk, 26th February 1895.

THERE is some exceptional distress in the borough, which is mainly caused by the severe weather. It is not, however, very great. There are a number of out-door workmen, strangers to the borough, who have been engaged in laying a main sewer in connection with a scheme for purifying the river, and the distress is chiefly amongst them.

A voluntary committee has been formed within the last few weeks to meet the distress by the distribution of tickets. The relief is given to about 50 families, representing 160 people.

No unemployed register is kept.

WAKEFIELD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 33,146. Rateable Value (1892–93), £147,164.

Letter from *J. Nicholson*, Mayor, 26th February 1895.

1. THERE has been a good deal of distress in the district, but this is mainly due to the long-continued severe weather, but is now abating.

2. Extra men have been employed in removing snow from the streets by the Corporation, and a voluntary distress fund has been got up by the Mayor, and about 300*l.* has been subscribed and distributed amongst some hundreds of people in the way of soup, groceries, provisions, coal, coke, and clothing, &c.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. As the frost appears now to be giving way and labourers and others are getting to work, I have no suggestions now to make, believing the present organised relief will meet the requirements of the case.

WOODSTOCK MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (OXFORD).

Population (1891), 1,628. Rateable Value (1892–93), £4,055.

Letter from *A. Ballard*, Town Clerk, 27th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the borough. Some few men are out of work, who are usually engaged in the building and timber trades.

2. There have been gifts of coal and bread distributed by the Charity Trustees, and from a fund raised by voluntary subscriptions.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Camborne Urban District (Cornwall).

Population (1891), 14,700. Assessable Value (1892–93), £35,261.

Letter from *J. Kirran*, Chairman, 27th February 1895.

I have to say that the Clerk will reply to your Circular on the unemployed. I may add, however, that the Council is considering a scheme for the making of a new road in the parish; and if a loan of, say, 600*l.* could be arranged at a low rate of interest and for a long term, it might help the Council to a decision. There are numbers of men out of work, and numbers more whose wage is very low, and who have been working a few days a week at the mills.

Chertsey Urban District (Surrey).

Population (1891), 11,298. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *T. E. H. Chaldecott*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in this district; but there is a considerable amount of distress caused by the severe weather and the recent floods.

2. My Council have taken no steps herein, but I believe the Poor Law Guardians are giving extra relief. Soup kitchens, the funds for which are raised by private subscription, distribute soup and bread. At Addlestone this distribution is free of charge, and made daily. At Chertsey 1*d.* per quart is charged, and the distribution is made twice weekly. The daily average of those relieved at the Chertsey Union for the week ended 16th February was as follows:—29, 32, 38, 39, 40, and 41 respectively. As to those relieved by the soup kitchens, I cannot give figures, but application should be made to the Vicar of Chertsey and Mr. J. Webb, of Great Grove Farm, Addlestone, for this information.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. I do not think any suggestion is necessary as to this; indeed, the master informed me on the 21st instant that, in spite of the severe weather, the number of men in the workhouse was less by one than at the corresponding period of 1894.

East Cowes Urban District (Isle of Wight).

Population (1891), 2,872. Assessable Value (1892-93), £9,195.

Letter from *R. W. Burnaby*, Chairman, 26th February 1895.

In the opinion of the Council there is no exceptional distress in this district, and the ordinary agencies have been, and are, adequate for the assistance of those who have been thrown out of work by the severe weather.

Grays Thurrock Urban District (Essex).

Letter from *H. E. Brooks*, Chairman, 27th February 1895.

Situation.—Twenty miles east of London; on the north bank of the Thames; about two miles west of the Tilbury Docks.

Population, at the 1891 Census, 12,219. Present estimated population, from 13,000 to 14,000.

Character of Population.—Almost exclusively industrial, together with a proportionate amount of the shopkeeping class.

The Occupations are:—Portland cement making; brick and whiting making; chalk quarrying; brewing; lightering on the Thames; together with some malting and iron working, as well as various kinds of work at the Tilbury Docks.

Rateable Valuation.—£36,147.

Local Taxation, for the year ending 31st March 1895:—

General District Rate (including Library Rate) - - - - - - -	3*s.* 8*d.* in the £
Poor Rate (including School and Burial Board charges) - - - - -	4*s.* do.
Total Rates - - - -	7*s.* 8*d.*

A Sewers Rate is also levied on property lying below high water level by the Court of Sewers Commissioners for the levels in which Grays is situate.

1. There is not, under ordinary circumstances, a great deal of distress in this neighbourhood arising from "want of employment." There are a certain number of persons, whose numbers are not placed by any person whom I have questioned at exceeding 100, who are accustomed to depend for their living upon casual employment at the Tilbury Dock; the remainder are in steady employment, although, in consequence of the serious depression in the cement trade the earnings of many have been considerably reduced below the figures at which they stood four years ago. So far as concerns those, whom we may call the "chronic unemployed," they have actually benefited by the

the recent frost, and have been in full employment for some three weeks past, by reason of the diversion of traffic from the up-river docks into the Tilbury Dock. The distress within our district may therefore be considered as confined to those who have been thrown out of employment by the severe frost, and who have by this time been enabled by the thaw to return to their regular work. To ascertain the extent of this I issued circulars to all the employers likely to be affected by the weather, and I summarise their reports below :—

(1.) *Hilton, Anderson, Brooks & Co., Ltd.*, Portland cement manufacturers. Ordinary staff, 450-500 men. Only men actually thrown out of work were the lightermen for a period of ten days to a fortnight. These included about 30 men, half of whom are married. Many of these are, however, in receipt of good wages, three at least averaging 70*s.* weekly, and owning house property. None were known to be in distress. All are now at work again. The whole of the other men, though work was much disconcerted, were found employment on the works in some way or other, and the wages bill for the last week of the frost was actually 20*l.* higher than it had been for some weeks past.

(2.) *Grays Chalk Quarries Co., Ltd.*, chalk quarry owners, lime burners, brick and whiting makers, report 20 men thrown out of employment for 14 days ; 75 men put on half-time for four weeks ; 75 men put on quarter-time for four weeks ; work resumed in full on the 25th instant.

(3.) *E. J. & W. Goldsmith*, lightermen, report 102 men thrown out of employment for 14 days ; 32 men put on half-time for 14 days, all of the lighterman class. All at work again since the 21st instant.

(4.) *Seabrooke & Sons., Ltd.*, brewers and coal merchants, report only five men thrown out of employment. Work to be resumed on the 25th instant. Bricklayers and labourers.

(5.) *H. J. Carter*, builder, reports 13 men thrown out of employment for three weeks: 27 put on short time for three weeks ; six hour time for one week ; eight hour time for two weeks. Work resumed 25th instant.

(6.) *H. R. Rons*, builder, reports 20 men thrown out of employment for four weeks. Work resumed 25th instant.

(7.) *G. T. Bastard*, builder, reports 10 men thrown out of work for 24 days ; two men on short time (total loss four days each). Work resumed 25th instant.

(8.) *J. Brown*, builder, reports six men thrown out of employment for 10 days each. Work resumed on the 21st instant.

(9.) *Clark & Standfield*, ironworkers and iron ship breakers, report no men thrown out of work. All fully employed.

(10.) *Cole & Lecquire*, corn and hay merchants, report eight lightermen thrown out of their ordinary work for 12 days, but odd jobs on shore found for them. The actual money loss to the men was but small (only 6*l.* between the whole number).

Summary.—Total number unemployed, 214 men and boys ; total number put on short time, 219 men and boys ; period, chiefly 14 days, but some as much as four weeks ; estimated loss of wages, 1,102*l.*

The above figures represent actual returns made to me ; but in addition thereto there are a few of the workmen—at a rough estimate 50—who live within our Urban District, but are employed in the two cement works just over the boundary, in West Thurrock Parish. One of these works was closed for nearly a week owing to the stoppage of supplies of fuel and raw material, but they resumed work some days ago.

2. As far as it is possible to ascertain, the most pressing needs have been fairly met by voluntary effort. I take the various branches of work separately :—Co-operative Stores Fund.—Distribution of soup and bread to about 200 families daily during 16 days ; estimated value of food materials, 22*l.* ; labour extra. Primitive Methodist Chapel Fund.—Distribution of soup and bread to about 60 families daily during similar period. Parish Church Fund.—About 20 families daily, with coals, groceries, bread and money. All Saints' Mission Church Fund.—About 20 to 25 families daily with coals, groceries, bread, and soup. Wesleyan Chapel Fund.—Relief in money and kind ; no details furnished. Baptist Chapel Fund.—Fifteen to 20 families daily by "relief tickets" accepted by almost any tradesman in the town. Congregational Chapel Fund.—Relief given to a considerable number by "relief tickets" ; no records kept. Mr. J. Cottis's Fund.—About 50 school children daily with bread and soup ; value of tickets presented at the Victoria Coffee Tavern by these children up to present time about 10*l.* Roman Catholic Church Fund.—Sixty to 70 children (in their schools) daily with soup and bread, and about 12 families weekly with groceries, soup, and money. Salvation Army Fund.—Soup kitchen, from which soup was sold at a nominal price, below real value ; also about 100 persons (not families) relieved in various ways weekly.

Of the money distributed as above by the various religious bodies, 28*l.* was furnished by the Charity Cup Committee (Football), and it was distributed solely in tickets redeemable at almost any tradesman's in the town in exchange for groceries, coal, provisions, &c. The money was divided up into 480 sixpenny and 480 twopenny tickets.

In connection with this section of the question I may add that it has been found that in many cases relief had been given to families whose breadwinners were in full work, and there appears to be no doubt that many families obtained relief simultaneously from different centres in the town, sending different children to each place.

3. Though the Urban District Council is preparing for a considerable expenditure on private street improvement work, it was found impossible to commence any of it for reasons dealt with in a subsequent paragraph. An extra expenditure of over 60*l.* was reported at the last meeting of the Council on the 14th instant ; wages and cartage expenses connected with the removal of snow from the main streets and pavements ; and the Surveyor was instructed to remove snow and scatter grit from the whole of the streets in the town, whether yet accepted by the public authority or not, in order to provide employment for the maximum number of men.

4. It is difficult to make any useful suggestions for dealing with a state of affairs such as has arisen during the recent frost, so far at least as concerns the work of this Council. The same cause which prevents the continuance of work in private hands must equally prevent the work of public bodies when of a constructive nature. No building operations can possibly proceed, and in the frozen condition of the ground it is difficult even to do excavation work. Stone-breaking is almost the only possible work available, but it is unpopular, and stocks of unbroken stone are not always ready to hand when an emergency of this sort arises.

Relief through the Poor Law Organization is almost the only possible means (other than voluntary effort) of dealing with an emergency of such a character as that produced by the unusual and prolonged frost ; and if a certain dispensing power existed by which the disfranchising of recipients of assistance under special circumstances could be suspended, almost the only real objection to the receipt of Poor Law relief under such circumstances might be removed. I would venture to suggest, however, that the time has arrived when the law relating to the carrying out of private street improvements should be amended so as to permit local authorities outside the metropolitan area to undertake the making up of the roads under the 150th section of the Public Health Act, 1875, without first calling on the owners to do it, and allowing a certain time to elapse. Although six or eight streets (I think eight is the number) have been made up under this section within this Urban District during the past few years, in only one case has

has the work been done except by the public authority. The one exception was a case of a small street, only partially built over, and entirely in the hands of one builder, and the Local Board, as it then was, refused consent to plans for further buildings unless the road were forthwith made up in accordance with the 150th section. In the streets now being taken in hand, of which there are a large number, and the cost of which, at a rough estimate, will be getting on for 10,000*l.*, it was impossible for the District Council to begin even preparatory work in order to find employment for the "out-of-works," because of the formalities which must be gone through first; yet it is certain that not a single owner on any of those streets will think of doing the work himself.

Inasmuch as Mr. Keir Hardie's statistics, as put before the Unemployed Committee, were avowedly drawn from branches of the Social Democratic Federation in different parts of the country, I may perhaps be permitted to add that, having received a communication from the local branch of this organisation concerning the question, I invited a personal interview, and one of their chief men waited upon me on Saturday last, the 23rd instant. In the course of that interview it appeared that:—

(1.) Only five or six cases of destitution were actually known to the members of the branch at Grays, although the words used in their written communication were that "many homes were nearly, if not quite, destitute of the means of subsistence." Even this number is, of course, serious; but I had expected a much wider basis for their representation.

(2.) Of the "chronic unemployed," or casual dock labouring class, 100 would be the outside of their number, and of these few, if any, would accept steady and regular employment, if they got the chance. He added that when a man once gets accustomed to casual employment, to working perhaps three days a week, and loafing during the remainder, it is difficult to induce him to accept regular work. This accords with the common opinion, but I quote it as rather useful confirmation, in view of its source.

(3.) The branch could suggest nothing practical except that the Council might employ men to break flints, in readiness for the contemplated private street work.

HEBBURN URBAN DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 16,645. Assessable Value (1892–93), £54,110.

Letter from *T. G. Mabane*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

1. THE distress in this district is not exceptional, but what there is is due to the fact of the chemical and copper works being closed and the unusual severity of the weather.

2. This Council have engaged at present 20 extra men in breaking metal for road purposes, and we are waiting the assent of the Local Government Board to the borrowing of a sum of 1,600*l.* for making new streets, whereby it is hoped to considerably alleviate the present distress.

3. Save and except the men actually engaged, no unemployed register has been maintained. There are several voluntary agencies in the shape of soup kitchens and free breakfasts for the children.

4. This Council have no suggestion to make beyond what is generally done in times of distress. The Council, however, hope that as finer weather has set in those at present unemployed in the district will soon be able to procure it.

HORNCASTLE URBAN DISTRICT (PARTS OF LINDSEY).

Population (1891), 4,374. Assessable Value (1892–93), £12,033.

Letter from *J. Panton*, Chairman, 27th February 1895.

1. I AM not aware of any exceptional distress in the district of the Urban District Council due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, but only to the severity of the weather.

2. This distress has been met, as in previous inclement seasons, by public subscriptions distributed by committees in a house-to-house visitation voluntarily undertaken. I have not the means of ascertaining the number of persons relieved in the week you mention.

3. No unemployed register is maintained that I am aware of, there not having been any necessity for one.

4. No suggestions to make. I believe the existing distress has been promptly met and dealt with in the way above-mentioned.

HOYLAND NETHER URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 11,006. Assessable Value (1892–93), £29,768.

Letter from *W. E. Raley*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

THERE is no very exceptional distress within the district. There certainly has been some distress owing partly to the closing of a colliery in the neighbourhood and partly to the severe weather, but the men formerly employed at the colliery are nearly all now obtaining work at another colliery belonging to the same owners as that closed or in adjoining collieries, or on the new Midland Railway at present in course of construction between Chapeltown and Barnsley.

My Council last night decided to proceed at once with the levelling of a road at Hoyland Nether, upon which work at least 20 men will be employed, and they are of opinion that this will relieve all the unemployed in the district at the present time.

No unemployed register is kept.

Unfortunately, although there are not many really unemployed in the neighbourhood, there are many miners at present working two or three days at the most, and therefore there is a considerable extent of poverty prevailing.

LEIGH URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 28,708. Assessable Value (1892–93), £78,383.

Letter from *J. Thorpe*, Chairman, 27th February 1895.

THE number and condition of the unemployed do not render necessary any steps being taken beyond the ordinary means of granting relief in addition to the private assistance being granted by a relief committee during the frost. There is a great variety of employment in the district.

LITTLE LEVER URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 5,168. Assessable Value (1892–93), £15,956.

Letter from *J. B Goulburn*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district. The industries are principally those of coal mining, cotton spinning, weaving, and bleaching, and they are at present finding employment for the customary number of hands.

There has, therefore, been no necessity for the establishment of soup kitchens or other means of alleviating distress.

The Council have not had an unemployed register in operation, nor do they think it necessary to commence one.

The Council are just on the point of commencing the construction of sewage outfall works. The construction of the works has been let by contract, but the Council have inserted a clause in the contract requiring the contractor to find employment for such able-bodied men who being out of work and residing in the district are desirous of being employed in the construction of the works.

LLANELLY URBAN DISTRICT (CARMARTHEN).

Population (1891), 23,937. Assessable Value (1892–93), £57,147.

Letter from *T. Hughes*, Chairman, 26th February, 1895.

THERE can be no doubt there is exceptional distress in the district due partly to the severe weather and partly to the want of employment.

A fund has been raised by voluntary contributions for the relief of pressing cases, which number about 600.

If the distress is of a temporary character, local efforts may be able to cope with it, but should the depression in trade continue it is feared that in addition to those now out of employ a greater number will become unemployed, and the only suggestion that I can make for relieving such distress would be the carrying out of public works with the aid of a grant from the Government.

LUDDENDEN FOOT URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,108. Assessable Value (1892–93), £10,107.

Letter from *H. B. Spencer*, Chairman, 27th February 1895.

THERE is not much exceptional distress in this district. There are not many out-door workers here, and most of them have children employed at the various mills in the district, and as these have been fully employed it has prevented much acute distress.

To relieve those who have been suffering either from illness or want of work three gentlemen in the district placed 50*l.* in the hands of two members of our Council, who, along with our Surveyor, have personally visited every house and distributed coals and flour wherever necessary. This money is not yet used up, and as the frost is breaking up it will most likely be sufficient to relieve all needful cases; if not, more is promised. When the snow and frost first came we employed several of our unemployed ratepayers clearing the roads and moving the snow, but lately we have not done this. About 80 families in all have been relieved.

We have no unemployed register kept in the village, as there is plenty of employment for women and children, and few men out of work except through the frost.

MELTHAM URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 4,761. Assessable Value (1892–93), £15,853.

Letter from *W. Carter*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. THERE is a certain amount of exceptional distress in the district, due principally to the severe weather, which has now prevailed some weeks.

2. The distress is being fairly dealt with by voluntary agencies.

3. No register of unemployed is being kept.

4. No suggestion to make.

MIDGLEY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,267. Assessable Value (1892-93), £6,583.

Letter from *J. Murgatroyd*, Chairman, 27th February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress, and what distress there is is on account of the late severe weather, and a breakdown at Oats Royd Mills does not make matters any better for the moment.

2. Two or three soup kitchens, funds contributed by private individuals.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

MILFORD URBAN DISTRICT (PEMBROKE).

Population (1891), 4,070. Assessable Value (1892-93), £7,328.

Letter from *W. Williams*, Chairman, 27th February 1895.

FROM inquiries I have made I have been unable to ascertain that there is any exceptional distress in the district, although there are, owing to the severe state of the weather and slackness of trade, a great many men out of work. There is no organised system of relief, but in many cases relief is being administered by private individuals.

NEWPORT URBAN DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 3,403. Assessable Value (1892-93), £8,181.

Letter from *J. S. Underhill*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

1. THE distress in the district is not exceptional, and is due to the severe weather.

2. The distress has been met voluntarily, and the average daily number relieved has been 50.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

OXENHOPE URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,475. Assessable Value (1892-93), £7,577.

Letter from *J. N. Clarkson*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in Oxenhope; the employment there is almost entirely confined to the woollen trade, and there has been no lack of employment, and in consequence no applications for relief have been made.

PADSTOW URBAN DISTRICT (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 1,546. Assessable Value (1892-93), £3,073.

Letter from *W. H. Pope*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

So far as the Council know, there is not at present any exceptional distress in this district.

PRESTEIGNE URBAN DISTRICT (RADNOR).

Population (1891), 1,360. Assessable Value (1892-93), £3,790.

Letter from *R. D. Cripps*, Chairman, 26th February 1895.

1. THERE has been no exceptional distress reported in this district; a few labourers are out of work, but I do not know that there are more than usual.

2. Nothing unusual has been done by public authorities or by voluntary agencies.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

REDRUTH URBAN DISTRICT (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 10,324. Assessable Value (1892–93), £25,140.

Letter from *H. Paige*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, partly due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, and partly due to the severe weather. This is essentially a tin mining and tin streaming district, and owing to foreign importation, which has caused the severe fall in the price of tin, several of the mines in the locality are no longer worked, and in nearly all the others a fewer number of miners is employed than formerly. The stoppage of some of the miners has increased the water in others. This has occasioned difficulty, and in one case, that of Wheal Basset, the mine is flooded and cannot be worked, thereby throwing about 200 able-bodied underground miners out of employ in addition to between 100 and 150 hands employed on surface. The severity of the weather has been the cause of much distress. All the tin streamers and tin dressers have been thrown out of work, as well as masons and others, including those employed upon the Redruth Waterworks, which were looked to as a source of employment for many of the unemployed miners during this winter.

2. A soup kitchen has been started at Redruth by voluntary efforts which, during the week ended Saturday, 16th February, relieved daily an average number of 231. The sum of 100*l.* has been voted to this Urban District from the County Miners' Relief Fund, to be appropriated (in so far as the same is not actually required for necessaries) in carrying out useful works in which the unemployed may be engaged. On Saturday the 16th instant, 126 in number of the heads of families, representing in all 541 persons, were relieved by grants of coal and flour from this fund, and a further distribution is about to be made. Since Monday last, from 20 to 30 of the unemployed have been employed by the District Council in carrying out relief road works, and the Council are considering how far others can be advantageously employed.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. There are many by-roads in the district which, though not repairable by the inhabitants at large, it would be a great advantage to the district to put in order, and the Council suggest a grant should be made by the Imperial Exchequer for this purpose, as no money can be borrowed or taken from the rates on this account. The Council also feel that a harbour refuge is most needful for the north coast of Cornwall, and if such a work were started it would mean the employment of many persons who have nothing to do.

SOUTH CROSLAND URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,078. Assessable Value (1892–93), £9,858.

Letter from *A. J. Slocombe*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

I AM instructed to send you a copy of a letter which I have received from the Vicar of South Crosland in relation to the distribution of relief during the recent protracted frost. The District Council are proceeding with another length of the sewerage of the village of Crosland, within their district, and in this way are providing work for out-door workers who otherwise might be unemployed. Upon the whole, the distress in the district has not been very great, and has been fully met by the agencies which have been at work in the district for that purpose.

(LETTER above referred to).

21st February 1895.

I find that the numbers of persons suffering from the long-continued storm are directly 33 cases, and indirectly 21 cases. These numbers may be accepted as approximately correct for Netherton, Crosland, and the factory. I do hope the frost is giving way.

(Signed) *W. Le Neve Bower*, Vicar.

WALTON LE DALE URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 10,556. Assessable Value (1892-93), £32,911.

Letter from *J. Ingham*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district; in fact, the Council have every reason to congratulate themselves upon the fairly prosperous state of their township. There has been no necessity whatever to deal with the matter in any way, neither have we as yet found it necessary to keep any unemployed register.

WEST COWES URBAN DISTRICT (ISLE OF WIGHT).

Population (1891), 7,690. Assessable Value (1892-93), £27,670.

Letter from *N. F. Dennis*, Surveyor, 26th February 1895.

1. THE distress in this district may be said to be mainly due to the severe weather.

2. There exists in Cowes a "compassionate fund" and one or two other private sources from which relief is given. The Guardians are giving employment to a number of men, and the District Council have special works in progress. The Council have given work to 32 extra men.

3 An unemployed register is maintained.

4. I am instructed to suggest that if a hulk were sent here to be broken up, a great number of the unemployed could be set to work.

WILLINGTON QUAY URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 7,345. Assessable Value (1892–93), £ 21,008.

Letter from *W. E. Daglish*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

AT a special meeting of this Council held yesterday the matter was again discussed. I would refer to my previous answers of 15th and 22nd instant, and supplementing these answers, I beg to report :

1. There is considerable distress in the district, due probably entirely to the severity of the weather.

2. My letter of the 22nd instant gives full answers as to the steps which were being taken to relieve the distress.

3. An employment registry is not kept.

4. The Board have no works which they consider they are entitled to undertake at present (except the proposed sewer, to commence which we are only awaiting for the assent of the Local Government Board to the proposed loan), but they think that the Corporation of Newcastle, who are owners of property in this district, might be asked to remove some large heaps of soil and ballast that remain upon a large number of proposed building sites belonging to them, particularly in Argyle-street, Rosehill-road, and Palmer's-terrace, and we are making this suggestion to the Newcastle Corporation. If the Local Government Board were to refer to this matter and express their willingness to sanction a loan for the purpose, the Corporation might possibly entertain it.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

AXBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 24,956. Rateable Value (1892–93), £242,326.

Letter from *W. Reece*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

1. THERE is not any exceptional distress in this district. There are, however, in the larger parishes, including Weston-super-Mare (Urban District), a certain number of men out of employment, but from no other cause than the severe frost.

2. The distress, such as it is, has been met by private charity, and the efforts of those who can find extra work for the men.

3. No register is kept.

4. As before stated, the distress in this district is not such as to call for any exceptional steps being taken

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BIDEFORD RURAL DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 7,269. Rateable Value (1892–93), £35,895.

Letter from *C. W. Hole*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress in this district, and it has not been found necessary to take any measures to meet such a contingency.

BLABY RURAL DISTRICT (LEICESTER).

Population (1891),———. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *W. Key*, Chairman, 27th February 1895.

1. IN my judgment, and so far as my inquiries enable me to form an opinion, there is very little distress in this district which can be said to be due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, but is mainly due to the severity of the weather which has materially affected the regular employment of quarrymen, railway navvies and others engaged in out-door employment. There has been some depression in the shoe trade, but not of an unusual character, in this district ; whilst agricultural operations have been practically suspended for some weeks, although in the main farm labourers have been enabled to draw their ordinary wages.

2. I believe the distress in this district has been fairly met and relief afforded by voluntary agencies in the larger villages. In the parish of Enderby, which I think may be taken as the worst parish to suffer, considerable help was afforded by voluntary subscriptions, and distributed by a local committee formed for the purpose. I have endeavoured to obtain a return of the number relieved through voluntary agencies for the week ended 16th February last, and enclose a return herewith received from the several parishes affected.

3. There are no unemployed registers maintained, so far as I am aware, in any of the parishes.

4. I have no suggestion to make in response to this inquiry.

(RETURN before referred to).

PARISH.	Is there exceptional Distress in the Parish?	Does it arise from Circumstances peculiar to the Parish, or from the Severe Weather?	Has any Voluntary Agency been at Work to Relieve it?	What Number was Relieved for the Week ended 16th February?	Is a Register of Unemployed maintained?
Blaby - -	There was during the frost, but it is better now.	The distress was chiefly due to the frost, though many had been suffering from the shortness of work.	Yes, two concerts, which together realised about 30*l.*, besides which a great deal has been done privately for those in need.	80 to 90	No.
Cosby - -	Not now, but during the frost there was considerable distress.	Wholly from the severe weather - -	Yes - - - - - -	About 45	No.
Countesthorpe -	Not very much more than usual, for the time of the year.	Chiefly from circumstances peculiar to the parish, as there is little or no demand for male labour, but women are in regular employment. A few men have been without agricultural work, owing to the severe weather.	Not at present, but there is to be an entertainment to-night for that purpose (February 25th).	—	No.
Croft - -	No, very little - - - -	Owing to the severe weather, as a rule, all parties are fully employed when the weather is favourable.	Yes, to a small extent - - -	Cannot say; have no record.	No.
Enderby - -	Yes - - - - - - -	Partly from the severe weather, which necessitated closing of the quarries, partly from slackness of boot trade, certain work being done by machinery.	Yes, a committee appointed to receive and dispense subscriptions.	300 to 400	No.
Glenfield - -	No - - - - - - -	What distress exists is purely attributable to the severe weather.	No - - - - - - -	No record.	No.
Narborough -	No, not extreme, but soon would be if frost continued.	Weather only - - - - -	Yes, by church and also by voluntary fund raised by Parish Council and administered by them.	60	No.
Thurlaston -	There has been, through inability to work. Only few cases remain.	From severe weather - - - - -	Yes, voluntary gifts of money and kind through church alms fund, and by individuals.	25	No
Whetstone -	Yes, for some time, and in a measure still continues.	From lack of employment generally, and the severe weather.	A relief committee formed, and temporary assistance afforded during last two or three weeks.	63	No.
Smaller Parishes not affected.					
			TOTAL - - -	633	

BURY RURAL DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 14,056. Rateable Value (1892–93), £67,597.

Letter from *J. Isherwood*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

OWING to the absence of the Chairman on the Continent I have consulted with the Vice-Chairman on the matter.

1. Both he and I are of opinion that there is no exceptional distress in the district, as in many cases where the head of the family is an out-door labourer and prevented by the severe weather from following his employment, some member of his family is working in some mill or factory.

2. There is nothing being done, except by voluntary agencies, to meet what little distress there may be.

3. There is no register of unemployed maintained.

CAMELFORD RURAL DISTRICT (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 6,906. Rateable Value (1892–93), £37,422.

Letter from *W. S. Hawker*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

THERE does not appear to be any great distress in this district.

The ordinary means of relief have, up to this time, been sufficient to meet the distress consequent on the severe weather.

CLUTTON RURAL DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 16,425. Rateable Value (1892–93), £100,982.

Letter from *E. H. Perrin*, Clerk, 26th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, and the few special applications for relief on account of the severity of the weather have been met by extra relief.

DAVENTRY RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 13,709. Rateable Value (1892–93), £126,537.

Letter from *W. Willoughby, jun.*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district which requires attention.

DRAYTON RURAL DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 11,969. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Tayleur*, Chairman, 26th February 1895.

I HAVE caused a communication to be addressed to the Chairmen of the Parish Councils in this district on the subject, and have also conferred with the Relieving Officer, and beg to enclose a statement showing the population of the parishes, the general character of the occupation of the poorer inhabitants, with the statements of the Parish Council Chairmen and of the Relieving Officer in regard to any existing want of employment. With regard to my own personal opinion, I have to state, in reply to the questions contained in your letter, as follows :—

1. There has been in the town of Market Drayton, the market centre of the district, considerable distress owing to the complete stoppage of work on land of any description during the severe weather. This has been met from voluntary sources and will, I think, be almost entirely, if not entirely, removed when the state of the weather admits of work on land being resumed. I do not think that there is permanent distress in the town through want of employment peculiar to the locality, unless to a small extent through the severe agricultural depression. In some of the more thickly-populated parishes around there cannot be a doubt but that there has for some time now been a steadily-growing want of employment owing to the last-named cause, and this has lately been aggravated considerably by the severe weather.

2. So far as I am aware nothing is being done by any public authority, but by voluntary agencies. The distress is, I believe, adequately met in all parts of the district. Particulars appear by the enclosed statement.

3. No register is maintained, so far as I am aware.

4. I do not see how matters are to improve until a revival of agricultural prosperity takes place.

(STATEMENT above referred to).

(1.) REPLIES of Chairmen of Parish Councils.

Name of Parish.	Population (1891).	Character of Employment.	(1.) Whether there is any exceptional Distress in the District, and how far this is due to Circumstances peculiar to the Locality or to the Severe Weather.	(2.) What is being done to meet the Distress by Public Authorities or by Voluntary Agencies, and the Average Daily Number relieved by each of the Agencies during the Week ended Saturday the 16th February.	(3.) Is an Unemployed Register maintained, and with what Result?	(4.) Have you any Suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving such Distress?
Tittenley -	34	Agricultural	The answer of the Chairman of the Parish Council of Adderley may be taken to represent the state of the case as regards this parish of Tittenley.	*See* answer to first question - - -	No.	—
Adderley -	361	Agricultural; also kennels of the South Cheshire Hunt.	We have no exceptional distress -	—	There is only one man unemployed and he is past work.	—
Cheswardine	902	Agricultural (The parish contains a medium - sized village.)	To a small extent, and owing entirely to the severe weather.	Voluntary agency has met the distress. Free dinners provided for 148 children during week named, or an average of 21 per day (highest number, 80). All men out of work were offered free dinners on three days, but not one availed himself of the offer. Strong soup and bread liberally supplied free to all needy and necessitous men, women, and children. Average daily number of men and women during above period was 16.	No - - -	No probability of any distress occurring in parish without its being promptly met from voluntary sources.
Childs Ercall	422	Agricultural	We have no exceptional distress in this parish, and no unemployed.	—	—	—
Drayton - in - Hales.	5,089	Town of Market Drayton is an agricultural centre. The last remnant of sieve weaving and hair seating industry still exists. Two foundries; remainder of population is agricultural.	There is certainly exceptional distress in this district, but I consider it due to the severe weather, and not to any circumstances peculiar to the locality.	Voluntary agency; subscription committee :— (*a*) By tickets for coal, bread, and groceries; 180 at an average of 1*s.* 6*d.* each; daily average, 26. (*b*) By dinners to children and adults; 900 at a cost of about 2¾*d.* each; daily average, 128. (*c*) By payment to men for work on clearing snow, getting gravel, filling gravel pit, &c., three days in the week; 73 at 2*s.* 6*d.* each; daily average, 24.	No - - -	I have given no consideration to the question.

(1.) Replies of Chairmen of Parish Councils—*continued.*

Name of Parish.	Population (1891).	Character of Employment.	(1.) Whether there is any exceptional Distress in the District, and how far this is due to Circumstances peculiar to the Locality or to the Severe Weather.	(2.) What is being done to meet the Distress by Public Authorities or by Voluntary Agencies, and the Average Daily Number relieved by each of the Agencies during the Week ended Saturday the 16th February.	(3.) Is an Unemployed Register maintained, and with what Result?	(4.) Have you any Suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving such Distress?
Hinstock -	781	Agricultural	We have no exceptional distress in this parish.	Voluntary agency; soup kitchen has been opened at the rectory.	—	—
Hodnet -	1,587	Agricultural (The parish contains one large village.)	Exceptional distress due to the depression of agriculture, and to the long continuance of the frost.	Voluntary agency; subscription committee have found work to all married labouring men, and also to such single men as are maintaining parents; 32 men were provided with work daily during week ended 16th February, at 2*s.* a day. The ordinary charities and private generosity have been quite equal to cope with any distress among the sick, infirm, or aged, so far.	Forty - one names have been placed on a list and all have been provided with work during the week ended 23rd February.	It is obvious that any measure that would relieve the depression in agriculture would greatly tend to minimise any possibility of distress in an agricultural parish.
Moreton Say -	777	Agricultural	No exceptional distress. A few men out of employment owing to the severity of the weather.	Nothing exceptional thought necessary	No.	—
Norton - in - Hales.	396	Agricultural	No reply received.	—	—	—
Stoke - upon - Tern.	790	Agricultural	Exceptional distress owing to the number of men out of employment through agricultural depression and the severity of the weather.	A soup kitchen has been open at the rectory, to which from 15 to 20 have come daily; also a few contributions for coal and bread have been sent and are distributed among the most needy.	No - - -	In this district whatever tends to improve the position of agriculture lightens distress.
Woore - -	830	Agricultural (one large village in the parish).	The condition of the people here is about normal.	Exceptional cases of distress are being dealt with by the Wesleyan Benevolent Society.	—	—

(2.) Statement of Relieving Officer of the Drayton Union.

"Among agricultural labourers there has been a growing want of employment in the parishes of Stoke-upon-Tern and Woore, more especially in the latter, during the past two years. In the parish of Hodnet a number of old men have been recently thrown out of employment through a large reduction of the estate staff on a large estate. The consequent distress has become much intensified through the severe weather, and there is but little doubt that when the frost breaks up there will be employment for those remaining in the district, the younger men having gradually to a considerable extent left in search of work elsewhere. In the town of Market Drayton there has been during the severe weather a large amount of distress, probably as many as 50 men being out of employment; many of these are, however, habitual loafers who will not at any time work save for exceptional pay. In the other parishes of the district there is not any exceptional want of employment, unless to a small extent in consequence of the severe weather. Any distress has been largely met by voluntary effort."

East Ashford Rural District (Kent).

Population (1891), 13,941. Rateable Value (1891-92), £90,792.

Letter from *H. Hamilton*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

1. There has been exceptional distress due to the severe weather.

2. The Guardians and Rural District Council combined have found employment in snow-heaving, rock-digging for proposed new roads in Willesborough and gravel-digging. Extra out-door relief has also been given. Drainage works have also been commenced in Willesborough. It is considered there will be sufficient work in this district when the weather has improved.

East Preston Rural District (West Sussex).

Population (1891), 8,692. Rateable Value (1892-93), £60,433.

Letter from *A. Heasman*, Chairman, 26th February 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. No unemployed register is maintained.

3. As presiding Chairman at the last meeting of the Board of Guardians of the East Preston Union, which includes Worthing and two small towns, there was only one application from an able-bodied man on account of being out of work.

FORDEN RURAL DISTRICT (MONTGOMERY).

Population (1891), 6,364. Rateable Value (1891-92), £———.

Letter from *R. Harrison*, Chairman, 27th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district other than has been caused by the exceptional severity of the weather.

Highway boards have, I believe, kept their men employed as much as possible. The highways do not come under the District Council till 31st March.

No unemployed register has been kept.

HARTISMERE RURAL DISTRICT (EAST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 12,627. Rateable Value (1892-93), £69,110.

Letter from *T. E. Cracknell*, Chairman, 25th February 1895.

WE have not had any exceptional distress in this district. There have been a few able-bodied men out of employment, owing entirely to the late severe weather, for a short period, but do not anticipate any difficulty now that the hard weather appears broken up. This is a purely agricultural district, and I may add that the farmers as a rule have kept their men employed.

No unemployed register kept.

HONITON RURAL DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 10,340. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *E. W. Hellier*, Assistant Clerk, 27th February 1895.

IN this district the distress is entirely owing to the severe weather, and there is no register of unemployed kept.

KING'S NORTON RURAL DISTRICT (WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 28,300. Rateable Value (1892-93), £170,564.

Letter from *T. R. Bayliss*, Chairman, 26th February 1895.

1. IN this district, which comprised at the census of 1891 a population of 28,300 over an area of 22,106 acres, there has been and is now exceptional distress in most parts of the district. Such distress would appear to be chiefly due to the severe weather.

2. The Guardians of the King's Norton Union are giving relief under the out-door relief labour test—*i.e.* spade labour and stone-breaking, and during the two weeks ended 20th February fourteen orders for such relief were offered to persons resident in the district of this Council, of which four were accepted. It is found that the distress is being relieved in all directions by a number of voluntary agencies organised and worked in connection with the churches, chapels, and all sorts of societies and relief funds, and in addition to these organisations it is found that much private benevolence is being dispensed. These societies and funds are very numerous and some of them are formed and worked in the same or an overlapping district. I am unable, therefore, to furnish any satisfactory statistics as to the average daily number relieved by each of the numerous agencies, as requested by your letter.

3. No unemployed register is maintained by the District Council.

4. In reply to Question No. 4, I am of opinion that Boards of Guardians should at times of exceptional distress be enabled to grant out-door relief to able-bodied persons for a temporary period without disfranchising the recipient of such temporary relief.

LLANRWST RURAL DISTRICT (DENBIGH).

Population (1891), 7,413. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *H. Pierce*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

No exceptional distress prevails in this district at present, and what hardship exists is due entirely to the severity of the weather; the Council have, therefore, no suggestions to make on the subject.

LODDON AND CLAVERING RURAL DISTRICT (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 13,204. Rateable Value (1892-93), £73,395.

Letter from *J. Holmes*, Chairman, 27th February 1895.

THERE does not appear to be a serious amount of distress, and if the Guardians are authorised to grant temporary out-door relief to able-bodied persons who are out of employment on account of the severe weather, the exigencies of the present time will be sufficiently met.

ROUNDHAY AND SEACROFT RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,059. Rateable Value (1892–93), £14,385.

Letter from *T. Woods*, Chairman, 27th February 1895.

THIS district, being of a rural and residential class, is not at all affected.

STRATTON RURAL DISTRICT (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 7,122. Rateable Value (1892–93), £39,657.

Letter from *W. Rowe*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district. A few men (especially masons) have been out of employment in consequence of the severity of the weather, but this occurs in most years.

A few men have been put on the highways to break up the ice and render them more passable. The severe weather having broken up, the men who have been out of employment are now being taken on again.

WALLINGFORD RURAL DISTRICT (BERKS).

Population (1891), 6,567. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Carthew*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

THE Guardians are not aware of any exceptional distress in this district requiring special provisions.

WHITCHURCH RURAL DISTRICT (HEREFORD).

Population (1891), 1,729. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *H. E. Sheppard*, Chairman, 26th February 1895.

THE Whitchurch Rural District is comprised of six parishes only, being in the Administrative County of Hereford, and in the Monmouth Poor Law Union. The population in 1891 was only 1,729, and the majority of the inhabitants are engaged in agricultural work.

1. To the best of my belief, the distress in the district is only slightly in excess of the average winter distress. The excess is due to the severe weather, and takes the form of (1) illness, owing to the hard winter; or (2) temporary want of work in certain cases, owing to the suspension of farm labour in various departments, owing to the severe weather.

2. Only by private charity and voluntary agencies; the statistics as to private charity are impossible to arrive at; with regard to voluntary agencies, a fund was started in the parish of Whitchurch and a local committee formed. This committee distributed coal to about 40 old or poor people in the parish, in measures of 4 cwt. each.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

WIGMORE RURAL DISTRICT (HEREFORD).

Population (1891), 3,209. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *A. Weyman*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

THERE does not seem to be any exceptional distress in this district.

There is no unemployed register.

YEOVIL RURAL DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 18,783. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. E. Rodber*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in a few of the parishes of this district, occasioned partly by the severe weather, but principally by the long continued depression in trade (glove-making and stone quarrying and stone dressing) but there does not appear to be any exceptional distress in purely agricultural parishes.

2. The Guardians have given out relief more liberally in all cases in which they could legally do so, and voluntary agencies have been at work for some weeks past relieving non-pauper cases. The Council are not, however, able to give the average daily number relieved by each of the agencies during the week ended Saturday the 16th February, as they have no data.

3. No register of unemployed is kept.

4. The Council are of opinion that voluntary agency is the best way of meeting exceptional distress, but they are also of opinion that it should be made legal to advance relief to able-bodied persons on loan, and providing that such loan be repaid in full, such persons should not be classed as paupers or be rendered subject to disfranchisement.

II.—COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Hastings County Borough.

Population (1891), 52,223. Rateable Value (1892–93), £363,513.

Letter from *S. T. Weston*, Mayor, 28th February 1895.

The four queries contained in the Board's Circular Letter were submitted to the various voluntary agencies formed in the borough for the purpose of relieving necessitous cases, and I send herewith a tabulated statement of the replies received.

I deemed it necessary myself to raise a fund for the relief of cases which would probably not be reached by the other agencies, and have included in the statement replies to the queries so far as that fund is concerned.

(Statement above referred to.)

Name of Voluntary Agency.	1.	2. Daily Number Relieved during the Week ended 16th February.	3.	4.
Association for Organising Charitable Relief and Repressing Mendicity.	There is exceptional distress, owing to severe weather.	37	Unemployed register kept, but the result is not satisfactory.	No suggestions to make.
Fisherman's Special Relief Association.	Not more than usual	40	No unemployed register kept.	- ditto - ditto.
Miss Garrett's Coffee Tavern	There is exceptional distress, owing to the severe weather.	100	- ditto - -	- ditto - ditto.
Rev. Sholto Newman's Relief Committee (Soup Kitchen).	- ditto - ditto -	50	- ditto - -	More out-door relief should be given, without making paupers of the recipients.
Winding-street Institution (Soup Kitchen).	- ditto - ditto -	30	- ditto - -	Special committees should be organised early in the season to visit the homes of the working classes, so that relief may be judiciously dispensed on an emergency (but no suggestion made as to how the funds should be obtained).
The Mayor's Special Fund -	The exceptional distress is more than usual, owing to the severe weather.	20	- ditto - -	I am of opinion that funds should be provided from the Imperial Exchequer to meet exceptional circumstances such as have arisen this year.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Lymington Municipal Borough (Southampton).

Population (1891), 4,551. Rateable Value (1892–93), £18,277.

Letter from *J. C. N. King*, Mayor, 28th February 1895.

1. There has been exceptional distress in this borough, arising from the prolonged and severe frost, affecting mostly the building trade.

2. This distress has been met by (*a*) voluntary subscriptions raised by myself; (*b*) employment by the Town Council of men in repairing the roads, and getting out gravel for the same; and (*c*) a charitable bequest by the late W. I. Whitaker, esq., of 200*l*., to be distributed in the purchase of coals and blankets. The average daily number relieved by these joint agencies during the week ended Saturday, the 16th instant, was 60.

3. No unemployed register has been maintained.

4. I have no further suggestion to make for the purpose of relieving such distress. In my opinion all that was possible to be done in relieving distress in this borough during the recent severe weather has been done.

MARGATE MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (KENT).

Population (1891), 18,417. Rateable Value (1892–93), £91,275.

Letter from *G. Foord-Kelcey*, Town Clerk, 27th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress other than that arising from the severe weather.

2. The distress is being met by voluntary effort, but no occasion has arisen for systematic daily relief.

WARRINGTON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 52,743. Rateable Value (1892–93), £168,584.

Letter from *J. L. Whittle*, Town Clerk, 28th February 1895.

1. EXCEPTIONAL distress has existed in the district, mainly, if not entirely, owing to the severe weather.

2. A voluntary committee (which was appointed for the purpose of meeting the distress in 1893, occasioned by the coal strike) have been actively engaged since the 11th January in relieving necessitous and deserving cases. A committee of four ladies act for each ward. Each lady is supplied with books of tickets, and is authorised to give orders upon local tradesmen for coal, bread, and groceries not exceeding in any case 1 cwt. of coal and 2*s.* 6*d.* in value for bread and groceries. These tickets are renewed from time to time, usually about every four days. The ladies also have the duty of visiting cases of sickness among the poor, and special gifts of clothing and food are made where required. The committee have also appointed two inquiry officers, whose duty it to report upon all applications made for relief. Up to the 15th February the committee had distributed 311*l.* for coal, bread, and groceries. On the 15th February the committee ceased to distribute tickets for coal and food except in cases of sickness, and on that day opened a soup kitchen for the distribution of food, allowing 1 lb. of bread and 1 pint of soup or potato hash per head, and half the quantity to children under 10 years of age. The food is distributed each day from 11 until 1, and the amount distributed up to this day is as follows : Soup, 29,865 pints ; bread, 24,640 lbs. ; at a cost of 242*l.* On an average 2,860 persons received relief daily. The milder weather of the last few days has enabled many to go back to their work, and it is proposed to close the soup kitchen on Wednesday next, and to resume the distribution of coal and food by means of tickets in all cases still requiring relief.

3. No register of the unemployed has been kept, but all applications for relief are entered in an inquiry book.

4. In my opinion voluntary organisation is capable of dealing with ordinary distress, but means are required for meeting exceptional distress. It may be possible to provide such means by better administration of the law for the relief of the poor by the relaxation of the regulations with regard to the necessitous and deserving poor, and the more stringent observance of the regulations with regard to idle and improvident persons. There exists in the minds of the deserving poor a very strong and proper repugnance to appeal to the Guardians for relief because of the taint of pauperism which attaches to parochial relief, and the disqualification to voters which the receipt of such relief entails.

I beg to enclose a report of the executive committee on the means adopted to meet the distress caused by the coal strike. [*This distress occurred in* 1893, *and the report has not, therefore, been printed.*]

IV. URBAN DISTRICTS.

ASHTON IN MAKERFIELD URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 13,379. Assessable Value (1892–93), £50,683.

Letter from *J. Hill*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

As this district is a mining one and as the collieries are working fairly well, there is no exceptional distress in the district. There are a few artisans and labourers out of employment in consequence of the severe frost, but there is no necessity for any action on the part of the local authority.

BISHOP AUCKLAND URBAN DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 10,527. Assessable Value (1892–93), £28,003.

Letter from *J. T. Proud*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

1. THERE does appear to have been a good deal of distress among masons, masons' labourers, and others, whose employment is dependent upon the weather, and who were in consequence of the exceptionally severe storm prevented from working for seven or eight weeks.

2. A soup kitchen was commenced under the auspices of the Temperance Society supported by voluntary contributions in the town, and during the worst weather an average of nearly 400 aged people and children were supplied.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make. I think the distress will disappear when the storm is over, and the work, of which there is a likelihood of being plenty, is resumed.

BRADFORD URBAN DISTRICT (WILTS).

Population (1891), 4,943. Assessable Value (1892-93), £13,454.

Letter from *J. Clark*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, and such as has existed has been met by private effort.

BROMLEY URBAN DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 21,684. Assessable Value (1892-93), £143,132.

Letter from *W. H. Bosanquet*, Chairman, 28th February 1895.

1. I HAVE made inquiry of several of the most important local agencies which administer charitable relief, and also of the Surveyor of our Council, and the general opinion appears to be that there is no very exceptional distress in Bromley at the present time; but the extreme cold has made the pinch of poverty more intense, and this has been met, in a very large number of cases, by extensive distributions of soup, bread, and fuel. There can be no doubt that there is in our neighbourhood an amount of unskilled labour largely in excess of the requirements of the district, the result being that, even in the open weather, there are a number of men who are unable to find steady or permanent employment. I see no reason to think that this state of things will come to an end unless a large number of the unemployed move to other districts where work may be more abundant. There are two building estates now being, or about to be, developed at Bromley, which may provide a certain amount of work; but having regard to the fact that the two railway companies which serve our district have recently raised their fares, and that the rolling stock provided by them is of the most miserable character conceivable, there is little to tempt fresh residents to come to Bromley, so that there is not likely to be a great demand for new houses.

2. Almost immediately after the commencement of the recent severe weather, our District Council took into their employ an extra number of men who were out of work, and utilised them partly upon the gravel pits belonging to the Council and partly in carrying out an important improvement on the main highway running through the district. In this way 80 additional men have, on the average, been employed daily throughout the present month; but it is impossible to shut one's eyes to the fact that this is the very worst season of the year for carrying out the work referred to; that many of those who have been employed are not really fitted to do the work, and that many others do not make any attempt to do a fair day's work in return for a full day's pay.

3. Up to the present time no attempt has been made to keep a register of the unemployed; but if it should be considered advisable in future winters to continue the present system and find work for those who may be thrown out of their ordinary employment, it will be absolutely necessary to keep a register in order to secure that assistance is given, in the first instance, at all events, to those only who have been resident in the neighbourhood some years, and who are able and willing to do the work offered to them.

4. I feel quite satisfied in my own mind that it will be impossible to find sufficient employment for all the unskilled labour in our district, and that the local authority must very soon exhaust all the works of improvement which may at present be open to it. The fact that boys and girls who have not the slightest prospect of being able to maintain themselves or their families are allowed to marry without any restriction tends to make the difficulty more acute year by year, and I am of opinion that the fact of any two such persons marrying should be considered and treated as a crime. Failing some drastic remedy in that direction, I see no alternative but for the Government of the country to support some very large scheme of State aided emigration which shall remove the surplus population to Central and South Africa or other countries where there may be good openings for able-bodied men. I submit, however, that this would only be a postponement of the evil, and that the present state of things must, under present conditions, inevitably arise again at no very distant date. I would not only suggest, but most strongly urge, that the stigma of pauperism should be removed from all work which may be provided by the Guardians, so that the sources from which remunerative labour can be provided may be extended rather than restricted. It is neither reasonable nor just that a man who is provided with work by the Guardians should be in a different position to one employed by such an authority as our Urban District Council, and I am strongly of opinion that steps should be taken, before the next winter is upon us, to remove the stigma which now bears so heavily on many who are able and willing to work, and have no desire whatever to have recourse to the assistance of charity. I beg to suggest also that the conditions under which out-door relief is given by the Guardians should be in some measure relaxed, and that, in the case, at all events, of the aged and infirm, the obtaining of such relief should be made as easy and convenient as possible. It is, I think, necessary to impress strongly upon Guardians that their duty is not so much to protect the rates as to relieve distress. It is quite impossible to give any reliable return of the average daily number relieved by each voluntary agency in a particular week, as requested in your Letter of the 19th instant. As Secretary of the Bromley Charitable Society, I think I may say that relief has been given by that single organization to as many as 300 or 350 families in one week; but in very many cases this assistance is necessitated not by want of work, but by illness or old age. There is a charitable agency attached to almost every place of worship; but as they more or less overlap one another, no trustworthy data can be given. It would also be impossible, without taking a house-to-house census, to make any return of the total number who are out of employment. As manager of a working men's club, I am in a position to state that the most respectable and self-respecting working men, even when they are willing to accept help in seasons of unusual severity, shrink from publicly parading their necessities or distress; and although I associate with the members almost every day of my life, I could not tell you how many of them are out of work, unless I made inquiry of each individual. There has been a certain amount of excitement in Bromley, got up and encouraged by a few men who belong to the so-called "Independent Labour Party." To them some sort of agitation and opportunities for speechifying are as necessary as the breath of life, and they rejoice in parading their real or supposed necessities to the accompaniment of a brass band, banners, and rattling money-boxes, by which means many a "loafer" has obtained the equivalent of a full day's pay without doing any work whatever, at the expense of thoughtless people who mistake them for the genuine article. These men prefer not to apply to any charitable agency, as such a proceeding would result in unpleasant investigations. One of the important committees of our Urban District Council lately interviewed some of these men, and tried to obtain precise information as to the number of men in the district who were out of work; but although they were ready, like their leader, Mr. Keir Hardie, M.P., to mention very large figures, they had, like him, to admit that they could not speak from practical experience. When dealing with this most difficult subject, I trust Your Honourable Board will bear in mind that the unemployed are claiming to be supplied with work at a season when very little out-door work of any kind can be done, and still less can be carried out properly and economically.

CLEATOR MOOR URBAN DISTRICT (CUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 9,464. Assessable Value (1892-93), £50,260.

Letter from *H. Rothery*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress, which is peculiar to the district, owing to the depression in the iron and steel trades, caused by high royalty rents and importation of foreign ores.

2. A number of men have been employed to remove the snow from the public streets in the district. For the week ended 16th February 19, and for the week ended 23rd February 59 men were so employed. Since the 7th February the children of all the unemployed persons in the district have been provided with one substantial meal per day at the cost of the Cleator Moor Co-operative Society, Limited.

3. No unemployed register has been kept, but one will now be opened.

4. No suggestions to make.

COALVILLE URBAN DISTRICT (LEICESTER).

Population (1891), 11,223. Assessable Value (1892-93), £37,938.

Letter from *T. Jesson*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

IN the opinion of the Council there is no exceptional distress in their district. No doubt, owing to the recent severe weather, a number of men engaged in the building trades and at the stone quarries have been temporarily thrown out of employment, but such cases have been satisfactorily met by voluntary agencies.

No register of the unemployed is maintained.

FENTON URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 16,998. Assessable Value (1892-93), £53,356.

Letter from *C. Adderley*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

1. THERE is no particularly exceptional distress other than is occasioned by the bad state of the potting trade of the district and the improvidence of some of the artizan class. The severe weather, of course, makes what distress there is more pronounced.

2. The District Council is not in a position to assist in alleviating the distress, excepting by the occasional employment of persons out of work in cleansing the streets, &c. They might probably have afforded employment in some few additional cases had the sanction of the Local Government Board been given to the several street improvements which they applied for some months since. The Guardians are doing all they possibly can to meet the circumstances in this neighbourhood; but until the stigma of pauperism is removed there will remain numbers of cases of refusal to accept the relief or labour provided by the Poor Law authorities. Such distress as has been accentuated by the severe weather has in some measure been alleviated by the distribution of bread, soup, &c., purchased by moneys voluntarily contributed for the purpose, and by the generosity of individuals. But I am unable to give the number relieved at any given date.

3. I am not aware that any register of unemployed has been established in the district.

4 Under the circumstances, I am unable to afford any suggestions which would be applicable to this district.

GOLCAR URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 9,108. Assessable Value (1892-93), £26,746.

Letter from *A. J. Slocombe*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

I SEND you copies of letters from the Vicar of Golcar and from the Rev. W. Gay, the Baptist minister at Golcar, in relation to the distribution of funds which they have severally raised for the purpose of affording relief to persons in distress during some portions of the months of January and February of the present year. The distress in the district, as you will see by the letters, has not been of any great magnitude, and has been fully met by the funds which have been raised for that purpose.

(LETTERS above referred to).

25 February 1895.

In answer to your letter, on inquiry I beg to say that from 28th January to 23rd February we relieved with soup, flour, tea, and bacon on an average 35 families every day, and also supplied free dinners to about 30 children daily at the national school. The families relieved were mainly the same each day.

(signed) *R. Willan.*

23 February 1895.

I distributed relief to 50 families during the week ended 16th February. I ought to say that about 10 or 12 of these had also received help from the Vicar, so that if you get a return from him these will be accounted for twice. All the others have been entirely on my hands.

(signed) *W. Gay.*

GUISELEY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 4,079. Assessable Value (1892–93), £10,705.

Letter from *C. J. Newstead*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress in this district from want of employment. The distress, such as it was, arose entirely from the severity of the weather, and has been relieved partly by private charity and partly by public funds collected and disbursed by a relief committee. The number of persons relieved on Saturday the 16th instant was 80. The distribution of relief has taken place weekly, not daily. The Council consider that further relief will no longer be necessary.

There is no register kept of the unemployed.

HOYLAND SWAINE URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 648. Assessable Value (1892–93), £2,824.

Letter from *E. J. F. Rideal*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district due to the severity of the weather; but in consequence of bad trade and the short time worked at the Penistone Steel Works, belonging to Messrs. Cammell and Co., Limited, there is amongst many who are employed there and live in the above district great poverty.

2 and 3. Nothing is being done by either the public authorities or voluntary agencies.

4. The Council have no suggestions to make.

LEYLAND URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 5,972. Assessable Value (1892–93), £17,273.

Letter from *J. Westley*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, except such as is due to the severe weather. Owing to this, building operations and other out-door work have been at a standstill, but even in cases where a member of the family has been unemployed from this cause, generally others have been earning money owing to the varied manufacturing and other pursuits of the district.

LITTLE WOOLTON URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 1,131. Assessable Value (1892–93), £13,280.

Letter from *P. Dobell*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

THERE is no distress within the district, and, consequently, no employment register is maintained.

MIRFIELD URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 11,707. Assessable Value (1892–93), £36,235.

Letter from *E. B. Wilson*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

1. THERE has been some little distress in Mirfield owing to the severe weather, but none owing to depression in trade.

2. The ordinary voluntary agencies, and a special fund raised, have been ample to meet any cases of distress, and there has been nothing done to call for special remark as to the number of persons relieved.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained, and no call for one.

4. The Council do not think that anything further is needed to be done in Mirfield.

OTTERY ST. MARY URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 3,855. Assessable Value (1892–93), £8,401.

Letter from *G. M. L. Reade*, Chairman, 27th February 1895.

IN further reply to your Circular Letter, I give you the following information with regard to the various parts of this Urban District, which comprises the mother-parish or town of Ottery and the four ecclesiastical parishes of Alfington, Escot, Tipton, and West Hill:—As to voluntary agencies in the town, the relief committee inform me that they have distributed (*a.*) to aged and infirm people, 80 gifts of coal of 1 cwt. each; (*b.*) to families of men unemployed, 35 bread and 35 grocery tickets, of 1*s.* each. A soup-kitchen has also been opened during the past two months; 40 gallons of soup, at 1*d.* per quart, have been distributed three times a week during the past fortnight, before that twice a week. Lord Coleridge also has given away a quantity of wood. At Escot, Sir John Kennaway has kindly taken on eight of the unemployed hands from the town parish, and a collection has been made in church towards the town relief fund. At Tipton, none are actually out of work though work is slack. At Alfington,

one man, out of work, has been employed by the public authority—as included below—and I have given 22 cwts. of coal. At West Hill, one man, out of work, has been employed by the public authority.

As to what has been done by the public authority. During the week ended Saturday last, the road, of which I told you before, has been widened; 29 men and 8 lads have, in all, been employed in the work, all of whom would otherwise have been out of employment. Between them these 37 workers made a total of 133½ days' work during the week, or an average of a little over 22¼ hands employed daily. A total sum of 12*l.* 9*s.* 7*d.* was paid to them in wages—a heavy burden on our rates—at 2*s.* per day, but a well-expended sum.

RAMSBOTTOM URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 16,726. Assessable Value (1892–93), £57,645.

Letter from *J. Ashworth*, 23rd February 1895.

1. THERE is no doubt exceptional distress in this district. The same is due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, in that a number of men are engaged in stone quarrying and out-door work, and also that for some time past the district has been unfortunate in several of the cotton mills standing idle. Of course, with regard to the out-workers, severe weather has been largely accountable.

2. As yet, the public authorities have not seen fit to interfere with the voluntary agencies in order to meet the distress, further than empowering the Surveyor to employ additional men and pay daily wages for work on the streets.

3. An unemployed register has not been maintained, but a representative from each of the four wards into which the district has been divided has been placed upon a committee to investigate the distress and report.

4. No practical suggestion to make at the present time.

SHILDON AND EAST THICKLEY URBAN DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 9,537. Assessable Value (1892–93), £18,784.

Letter from *J. T. Proud*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress of any moment. Some few masons and masons' labourers may be out of employment, but they are few in number. The population is principally mining and railway men.

2. No special steps have been taken.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

TRAWDEN URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 2,354. Assessable Value (1892–93), £6,163.

Letter from *G. Burr*, Law Clerk, 28th February 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.

No register is kept, none being required.

UXBRIDGE URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 8,206. Assessable Value (1892–93), £29,889.

Letter from *W. Garner*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district at the present time, although the late severe weather produced such a state of things.

2. The distress lately prevalent from the severe weather was met by the distribution of food to the wives and families of those needing it, and in some cases the employment of men for local work.

3. There is no employment register.

4. The Council do not think they are in a position to make any suggestions for permanently relieving distress by the employment of men for purposes other than the ordinary works, for which full provision has already been made.

WINTERTON URBAN DISTRICT (PARTS OF LINDSEY).

Population (1891), 1,400. Assessable Value (1892-93), £3,800.

Letter from *J. R. Spilman*, Chairman, 28th February 1895.

WE have had no exceptional distress here, this being a purely agricultural district. The distress does not exist as in large centres.

The Council have done what they could in finding employment on the district highways, and street cleansing from snow, &c., whereby those who were temporarily out of employ through the exceptionally severe winter weeks might not be wholly without work.

WITHAM URBAN DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 3,444. Assessable Value (1892-93), £9,460.

Letter from *J. Cook*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress in the district. The severe weather prevented farming operations to some extent, but now that the thaw has come, the farm labourers have resumed work.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

ALCESTER } RURAL DISTRICTS {(WARWICK).
FECKENHAM } {(WORCESTER).

Population (1891) { Alcester, 11,410 / Feckenham, 5,744 } Rateable Value (1892-93), £84,351.

Letter from *S. A. Gothard*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress in either of these districts, neither has the intervention or assistance of either local authority been called into requisition.

ANDOVER RURAL DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 9,709. Rateable Value (1892-93), £55,492.

Letter from *T. Lamb*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress in this district, and therefore nothing has been required to be done for relieving same.

BRAMPTON RURAL DISTRICT (CUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 9,754. Rateable Value (1893-93), £83,984.

Letter from *G. Birkett*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

1. ANY exceptional distress is owing to the severe weather.

2. Surveyor has received instructions to employ men in snow-cutting. Total number employed, 29 men; number of days, 84; cost, 12*l.* 12*s.* Twenty-five men have been employed making a footpath on public road; they commence work at 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., with one hour for dinner; pay, 2*s.* per day. Two hundred tons of lime and whinstone have been laid down to break during the last month; cost per ton, breaking, 2*s.* 4*d.* A soup kitchen has been opened in the town of Brampton by public subscription; open six days per week for six weeks. About 80 families receive from one to two quarts per day, at a cost of 7*l.* 10*s.* per week.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. Widening of footpaths and roads, &c.

CARMARTHEN RURAL DISTRICT (CARMARTHEN).

Population (1891), 23,873. Rateable Value (1892-93), £148,403.

Letter from *R. Browne*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

1. THIS district is almost purely agricultural, and there is no exceptional distress arising from want of employment. There have been a few farm labourers and timber haulers out of work for a short time, on account of the severity of the weather.

2. No relief measures are taken, as there is no distress.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

CAXTON AND ARRINGTON RURAL DISTRICT (CAMBRIDGE AND HUNTINGDON).

Population (1891), 8,506. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *S. Wilkinson*, Clerk, 27th February 1895.

1. THERE have been, and still are, several able-bodied men out of work in most of the parishes in this Union; this is attributed as much to the depressed state of agriculture as to the recent severe frost.

2. Nothing special has been done by public authorities, private charity and credit are the chief agencies.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. During the depression in agriculture there will be distress, more or less, in this district, as it is purely agricultural.

CONGLETON RURAL DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 12,495. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *Joseph Hill*, Chairman, 27th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district, except in the township of Wheelock, and that is chiefly occasioned by the closing of the iron works, consequent upon the operation of the M'Kinley Tariff.

2. The Council are engaged upon works of water supply in the township, and this, to some extent, finds employment to Wheelock men. Voluntary efforts, however, in the shape of concerts, subscription lists, and soup kitchens have proved at the present adequate in meeting the distress.

3. No employment register is kept.

4. No further suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving such distress.

CREDITON RURAL DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 12,898. Rateable Value (1892–93), £101,661.

Letter from *J. Wellington*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

THERE has not been in this district any exceptional distress from want of employment in consequence of the late severe weather, and consequently the Council did not deem it necessary to take any exceptional measures, though much has been done in the distribution of charities by voluntary agencies to the necessitous poor of the district.

DRAYTON RURAL DISTRICT (SALOP AND CHESTER).

Population (1891), 11,969. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. St. C. Upton*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

REFERRING to the letter of 26th instant of Mr. Tayleur, the Chairman, relative to the unemployed, I am desired by that gentleman to state that a reply has this morning been received from the Chairman of the Parish Council of Norton-in-Hales, to the questions propounded by your Honourable Board, in the following terms, viz.:—

Parish of Norton-in-Hales.

1. There has been some exceptional distress in this parish, entirely due to the severe weather.

2. Voluntary efforts by individuals are quite equal to the circumstances, which have not exceeded some three labourers out of work.

3. No unemployed register is maintained or necessary.

4. The distress will cease with the advent of open weather, and is, in the meantime, allayed by voluntary agencies.

DROXFORD RURAL DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 11,392. Rateable Value (1892–93), £56,824.

Letter from *F. Clark*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

1. THERE is not any exceptional distress in this district.

2. The Relieving Officer has been instructed to at once give relief in all urgent distressing cases coming under his notice, and the District Surveyor has been instructed to give employment in digging and collecting road materials where he meets with persons requiring employment.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. From the above facts no suggestions are required for the purpose of relieving exceptional distress.

FROME RURAL DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 13,233. Rateable Value (1892–93), £93,450.

Letter from *G. W. Bradbury*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

1. No exceptional distress exists, but owing to the severe weather many hands are out temporarily. In the colliery villages many hands are partially idle owing to the depression of trade.

2. Nothing done by public authorities or voluntary agencies. Stone-breaking by the sides of the roads is frequently available for special cases.

3. No register maintained.

4. No suggestion to make.

GUILDFORD RURAL DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1881), 19,543. Rateable Value (1892–93), £206,479.

Letter from *W. S. V. Cullerne*, Clerk, 28th Feburary 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. The Council are informed that there are several voluntary agencies at work, and that there is every reason to believe that such agencies are able to cope with any distress that might be in the district.

3. No unemployed register is maintained in this district.

4. The Council have no observations to make on the subject of relieving distress, inasmuch as, fortunately for this district, the distress is not exceptional.

HEREFORD RURAL DISTRICT (HEREFORD).

Population (1891), 13,853. Rateable Value (1892–93), £130,596.

Letter from *T. Llanwarne*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

THE district under the jurisdiction of the Council is purely agricultural, and no acute distress has arisen in consequence of non-employment. The severity of the recent weather has no doubt thrown many persons out of work, but as they were principally, if not altogether agricultural labourers, the individual cases have been dealt with by the farmers themselves, who have, in many if not most instances, continued to pay or partially pay the men when there was actually nothing for them to do.

The Council have now arranged with the existing Highway Board to commence the preparation of their material for road-making for the next season, so that should there be still any men out of employment they may be set to work by the Highway Board as stone-breakers.

MELKSHAM RURAL DISTRICT (WILTS).

Population (1891), 4,775. Rateable Value (1892–93), £34,228.

Letter from *W. J. Mann*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this Rural District.

2. No special effort is being made to meet distress by public authorities or voluntary agencies.

3. An unemployed register is not kept.

4. It does not appear to the Council to be necessary under these circumstances to make any such suggestions as are alluded to.

SOLIHULL RURAL DISTRICT (WARWICK).

Population (1891), 12,681. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *C. Madeley*, Chairman, 28th February 1895.

1. MANY men have been deprived of work by the severity of the weather, but there were no able-bodied applicants for relief.

2. Soup-kitchens and private benevolence were sufficient to meet the temporary necessities of the cases.

3. No register is kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

TAUNTON RURAL DISTRICT (SOMERSET AND DEVON).

Population (1891), 18,753. Rateable Value (1892–93), £161,055.

Letter from *W. F. B. Daws*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the district, due entirely to the very severe weather.

2. Nothing is done, so far as is known, by public authorities, but there are voluntary agencies it is believed in many of the rural districts; considerable quantities of coal and other necessaries have been distributed, but no reliable statistics can be given.

3. No register of unemployed is kept.

4. A general thaw and warmer weather would at once relieve distress and make employment very plentiful.

TENBURY RURAL DISTRICT (WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 4,787. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *W. S. Davis*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

1. THERE has been a certain amount of exceptional distress, owing to the severe weather.

2. A small amount of public work has been done, and private charity has sufficed for the remainder. No account has been kept of the daily number employed.

3. No unemployed register has been kept.

4. The distress has ceased with the termination of the frost.

II.—COUNTY BOROUGHS.

BRIGHTON COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 115,873. Rateable Value (1892–93), £705,470.

Letter from *F. J. Tillstone*, Town Clerk, 1st March 1895.

1. THERE is considerable distress, but it is due in great measure to the severe weather.

2. The Board of Guardians had their labour shed in use, but this did little to meet the case. The Town Council carried out all possible works and were employing extra men as far as possible. But beyond this it was evident that there was urgent and exceptional distress which could only therefore be met by an appeal to private charity. On 11th February, the Mayor, in accordance with a requisition, called a public meeting at the Town Hall and a relief fund was established. All persons were free to make application if they had resided six months in the borough. We have received about 2,000 applications and about 2,000*l.* in money and kind. As far as possible we have found employment for all the men, paying out of our fund 4½*d.* per hour, and giving three days per week, thus enabling them to earn about 10*s.* per week. The work found for the men consisted:— (1) of pulling down houses in the condemned area and removing materials; (2) breaking flints; (3) pile-driving, &c., for sea defences; (4) levelling land and sifting ashes; (5) sifting coombe rock and flints; (6) pulling down house and levelling site for Technical Schools. (NOTE—The above being profitable work, the Town Council will return the value of the work to the Relief Committee.) (7) Sending men round with the turncocks to carry water from the stand-pipes to the houses of all persons whose supply was stopped by the frost. This work was an accommodation to the householders, and the committee expect no return of money for this. The names, residences, occupations, &c., of all applicants are registered, and in a few cases private residents have offered to give employment, and we have sent the kind of men required. In all about 700 men have been given employment. The other 1,300 have received relief to the average extent of 1*s.* per day in kind, by tickets for bread, coal, groceries, and soup, available at any shop in the borough, thus helping also the small shopkeepers. Single men have received a little less than 1*s.* per day and large families up to 1*s.* 6*d.* per day. The average daily number relieved by this fund, by work, or food, &c., during the week ended Saturday the 16th February, was 1,465.

3. A register of the unemployed has been compiled and the numbers of each occupation ascertained. Very few applications from employers have been received, but the men are slowly returning to their former work as the weather moderates.

4. The committee have had some assistance from the police and Relieving Officers, and have perhaps succeeded in preventing notorious bad characters and well-known idle loafers from participating in the fund, but beyond this they have not attempted any close discrimination as they had not the requisite machinery. They would venture to recommend some extension of the powers of the Guardians to relieve able-bodied men at exceptional times like the present, such relief not to disfranchise the recipients.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

ACCRINGTON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 38,603. Rateable Value (1892–93), £136,798.

Letter from *A. H. Aitken*, Town Clerk, 1st March 1895.

1. THERE has been and still is, owing to the severity of the weather, exceptional distress, and no doubt owing to the slackness in the building trade there will be a large number of masons and out-door labourers without employment for a considerable period.

2. The Mayor opened a fund for the relief of the distressed, which was administered by a committee of artisans under the chairmanship of the Chief Constable, and the average daily number relieved was 46 to 48 families.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. The suggestions which this Town Council has to make for the purpose of relieving distress under similar circumstances are, that the Town Council should be permitted when distress arises, owing to the severity of the weather, to find employment in the shape of street improvements and other out-door works, not including buildings, out of capital monies without having to wait for the sanction of the Local Government Board, such works being permanent works within the meaning of the Public Health Act, 1875. Such out-door works are of course limited in character during frosty weather, but many men can be employed in stone-breaking for concreting and similar purposes for street improvements which can be carried on as soon as the frost breaks.

COLCHESTER MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 34,559. Rateable Value (1892-93), £106,514.

Letter from *C. E. Egerton-Green*, Mayor, 1st March 1895.

THERE is always a glut in the Colchester labour market, owing to the soldiers being constantly discharged from the regiments stationed here; consequently in winter there are always a large number of men out of work, in addition to a considerable proportion of loafers, who will not work at any time, but are always very much in evidence as soon as there is any prospect of relief being distributed.

1. This year, no doubt, the distress is exceptional and may be attributed partly to the severity of the weather, but I am firmly convinced that the disastrous agricultural depression from which this district is suffering is very largely responsible for the distress in my borough. Not only has want of employment in the country driven the men into the town, but the restricted circulation of money has acted prejudicially upon every trade industry.

2. I must apologise for not being able to send as full an answer as I could wish, owing to our staff being decimated by influenza, but I trust the enclosed statistics may show what steps have been taken to meet the distress :—(*a*) By the Corporation, in finding employment on necessary work, such as snow-clearing, and ice-breaking in the river ; and on improvements, such as widening roads ; (*b*) By the Poor Relief Fund, which is supported by voluntary contributions, and is managed by a committee of which I am chairman. I also enclose a paper giving the return of out-relief at the Colchester Union, which tends to show that the distress has affected the better class of artizan, who will rather starve than apply for relief, as the numbers show no marked increase.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The only suggestion I can make is that something should be done for agriculture, and at once.

(Statements accompanying above Letter).

(1.)

Old Heath-road Improvements.—From 30th January to 2nd February 1895 : 32 men employed at a cost of 11*l.* 3*s.* ; from 4th to 7th February : 31 men employed at a cost of 10*l.* 9*s.* ; total, 21*l.* 12*s.* Snow cleaning.—2nd February 1895 : 99 men employed at a cost of 8*l.* 12*s.* ; 4th February : 77 men employed at a cost of 8*l.* ; total, 16*l.* 12*s.* Cost of hired teams for removing snow, 34*l.* 13*s.* Drury-lane Improvements.—7th February : 15 men employed at a cost of 1*l.* 10*s.* ; 8th to 16th February : 104 men employed at a cost of 73*l.* 3*s.* ; 16th to 23rd February : 41 men employed at a cost of 21*l.* 1*s.* ; total, 95*l.* 14*s.* Maldon-road Improvements.—30th January to 2nd February : 18 men employed at a cost of 5*l.* 3*s.* ; 4th to 6th February 1895 : 12 men employed at a cost of 3*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.* ; total, 8*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.* Rate per day 2*s.* ; 36*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* were spent by the Harbour and Navigation department in employing men to break the ice, and tow barges up and down the river.

(2.)

Colchester Poor Relief Fund.

At the soup kitchen.—The average daily number of men relieved may be stated approximately as 300 ; the soup and bread supplied to persons for consumption in their own homes would doubtless relieve daily, 800 ; 1,000 relief tickets for the week, say each ticket relieves on an average three persons and will last three and a half days, 3,000 ; total, 4,100.

(3.)

RETURN of Out-relief for First Quarter of the Years 1880 and 1890 to 1894, and First Eight Weeks of 1895.

	1880.	1890.	1891.	1892.	1893.	1894.	1895.
1st week - -	656	871	901	782	837	875	866
2nd „ - -	634	883	909	793	875	865	871
3rd „ - -	655	904	917	843	868	902	883
4th „ - -	663	908	919	843	874	911	891
5th „ - -	681	931	909	824	874	899	904
6th „ - -	690	957	882	848	879	884	909
7th „ - -	708	934	855	846	869	880	903
8th „ - -	723	934	832	841	881	878	887
9th „ - -	765	922	838	841	883	860	—
10th „ - -	755	915	833	797	851	831	—
11th „ - -	752	926	841	821	837	812	—
12th „ - -	729	908	833	795	829	798	—
13th „ - -	708	905	823	790	813	794	—
TOTAL - - -	9,119	11,898	11,292	10,664	11,170	11,189	7,114

LOWESTOFT MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (EAST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 23,347. Rateable Value (1892–93), £87,382.

Letter from *R. B. Nicholson*, Town Clerk, 1st March 1895.

ABOUT 80 unemployed persons applied to the Mayor for work, and work was found for these in raising embankments for the purpose of protecting the Public Pleasure Grounds (which had been flooded by high tides) from future encroachments by the sea. In addition to this, the Corporation always at this time of year purchase beach stones gathered and broken by persons who are otherwise unemployed. Beyond this no exceptional agencies have been started for the relief of distress. Soup kitchens for the supply of soup for a nominal payment are opened every year, and have been kept open this year longer than usual in consequence of the protracted frost.

No unemployed register is kept.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

BRIDLINGTON URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, EAST RIDING).

Population (1891), 8,916. Assessable Value (1892–93), £38,390.

Letter from *C. Gray*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress within the district.

EDMONTON URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 25,381. Assessable Value (1892–93), £78,497.

Letter from *G. E. Eachus*, Engineer, 1st March 1895.

1. THERE has been exceptional distress in this district, mainly in my opinion, due to the severe weather, but the same kind of distress, to a rather less degree, has prevailed in this district for some few years.

2. We have this year had 352 applications for work, and of this number 265 have been temporarily employed, either in removing snow, scavenging, cutting a new boundary ditch, in spade husbandry at the sewage farm, and in laying a surface drain, for which a loan was sanctioned some time since by your Board. In this way the local authority have disbursed a little over 300*l*. During the week ended 16th February the daily average was only 19 additional men employed. With reference to the voluntary agencies there is a central fund established by a committee on the 15th February, consisting of those of the Guardians who reside in the district, and a committee of the District Council assisted by the labour organisation. On the 15th February they relieved 218 men, and on 16th February, 221. Each married man had tickets on tradesmen to the value of 2*s*. or 2*s*. 6*d*., and each single man 1*s*. or 1*s*. 6*d*. in the same form. In addition to this central fund the Vicar of Edmonton informs me that the daily average of free dinners distributed at the parish room is 114; free breakfasts, 71; sacks of coal, 7; bread tickets, 36. The Vicar of St. James' distributed during the same week a daily average of 114 quarts of soup, 28 loaves of bread, and 11*s*. worth of grocery. At the Board Schools a daily average of 321 free breakfasts and 64 free dinners were given to the children from private subscriptions. Mr. Baker in connection with the Gospel Union distributed on an average 156 free breakfasts, and Mr. Joslin, privately, 57 quarts of soup, and 28 pounds of bread.

3. We have kept a register of the unemployed, but with no result, except that three or four from the ranks have obtained regular work under the Council.

4. This winter our ditch work, owing to the frost, has not been so remunerative to the men, otherwise work of this kind which helps to drain the subsoil and to prevent floods had been found the most practicable, as the men receive a fixed price for each cubic yard of soil excavated and wheeled away.

ERDINGTON URBAN DISTRICT (WARWICK).

Population (1891), ———. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *W. Ashford*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, due entirely to the severe weather.

2. The distress is being met by voluntary agencies, the number relieved by such agencies being upwards of 110 families per day for the week ended 16th February.

3. No register of the unemployed is kept.

4. The Chairman has no suggestion to make for further means of relieving the distress in this district. In his opinion the existing voluntary agencies fully meet the demand, and with a cessation of the severe weather the necessity for exceptional relief will cease.

HANWELL URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 6,139. Assessable Value (1892–93), £21,464.

Letter from *W. S. James*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. Such distress as does exist, and which is not more than usual at this time of the year, is being met by voluntary agencies, in the distribution of food, coals, &c., but we are unable to supply the average daily number relieved during the week ended Saturday the 16th ultimo.

4. No employment register is maintained.

IRLAM URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), ———. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *T. S. Wommack*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

1. THERE is a certain amount of exceptional distress in this district, due principally to the severe weather.

2. Until the 16th February no relief was afforded, except through the ordinary channels, viz., the Poor Law Guardians. Since then voluntary aid has been given, and a relief committee has been established to look after exceptional cases.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained in this district.

4. No suggestions to make as to the relieving of exceptional distress.

LEVENSHULME URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 5,506. Assessable Value (1892–93), £22,144.

Letter from *J. Hardicker*, Clerk, 28th February 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in the district, which is due both to the severe weather and to the fact that a large works situate in the district is on short time.

2. The Council employ as many of the unemployed as is practicable, but otherwise the distress is only relieved by a voluntary distress fund. This latter agency are, practically speaking, about 130 families, according to their returns.

3. No unemployed register is kept by the Council.

LLANFRECHFA UPPER URBAN DISTRICT (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 2,780. Assessable Value (1892–93), £6,081.

Letter from *J. Jacob*, Chairman, 1st March 1895.

No exceptional distress; works fully employed. The severe weather has, no doubt, interfered with out-door employment.

2. Having no distress, nothing was necessary to be done.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

NORTHAM URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 5,043. Assessable Value (1892–93), £11,018.

Letter from *C. W. Hole*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

No exceptional distress has occurred in this district, and therefore it has been unnecessary to take any measures to give effect to suggestions therein contained.

PONTYPOOL URBAN DISTRICT (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 5,842. Assessable Value (1892–93), £15,430.

Letter from *W. Sandbrook*, Chairman, 28th February 1895.

1. VERY great distress exists in this district due to the long stoppage of large collieries, iron-works, and tin-plate works in the immediate vicinity, recently much intensified by the exceptional severe weather and consequent suspension of all out-door employment, and the general trade in the district is in a state of utter collapse.

2. This Council is unable to give any except intermittent employment as a means of relieving the distress, because we have no available funds without obtaining further powers to borrow money. There is a relief committee in the town who have canvassed the district for voluntary contributions in money and provisions, and by whom over 1,100 are being relieved regularly in various ways, soup given daily, and notes for groceries and coal are given twice a week. There is another committeee connected with the George-street Mission Rooms, who give a meal a day in soup to about 150 children, and about 120 men and women.

3. No unemployed register kept, except of those who are relieved by the committee.

4. Our District Council strongly urge the Government to make grants in aid to local authorities, such grants to bear some relation to the amount of distress prevailing. The funds available locally for relieving the distress will soon be exhausted. The Council will send a witness or witnesses to give evidence before your Commission if desired.

SHORT HEATH URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 2,514. Assessable Value (1892–93), £3,088.

Letter from *G. W. C. Dams*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

AT the present time there is no exceptional distress in this district.

WHITBY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 13,075. Assessable Value (1892–93), £47,095.

Letter from *W. S. Gray*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, and the Council have not been called upon in any way to meet distress arising from "want of employment." The local industries are iron shipbuilding, and building, and both trades have been comparatively brisk during this winter.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

BICESTER RURAL DISTRICT (OXFORD).

Population (1891), 10,965. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *G. Walsh*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

THE distress has not been exceptional or greater even than might have been expected in an agricultural district such as that of the Bicester Union, and what distress there has been has been occasioned by the long-continued severity of the winter.

I may add there has been no application for work by any unemployed in this Union.

BLEAN RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 12,715. Rateable Value (1892–93), £77,662.

Letter from *J. E. Burch*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

No exceptional distress exists within the district. In the adjoining urban district of Whitstable, recently formed under the Local Government Act, 1888, a considerable amount of distress appears to exist, and I forward herewith, for the information of the Local Government Board, a copy of a letter upon the subject received from a member of one of the voluntary agencies.

(Letter above referred to).

28 February 1895.

THE relief committee distributed soup and bread on February 12th, 14th, and 16th, when 356, 350, and 390 families were relieved. This has been continued up to date, there being already 11 distributions. Messrs. Collar Brothers give on an average 200 free breakfasts to children every morning, this being the 30th morning. Messrs. Cornelius and Amos, for the week ended 16th February, gave 457, 306, 344, 324, and 312 free breakfasts. The Baptists are also giving from 100 to 120 free breakfasts every morning. The Congregationalists have also given free meals to adults. Of course there has been an enormous lot of private charity. The place is very poor indeed, and the prospects of improvement are not very bright.

(signed) *G. Kirkby.*

BLORE HEATH RURAL DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 2,227. Rateable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *F. Twemlow*, Chairman, 28th February 1895.

THE district comprises three parishes, namely, Ashley, Mucclestone, and Tyrley, with the populations respectively of 797, 709, and 721. The parishes of Mucclestone and Tyrley are entirely agricultural in character, and in them there does not appear to have been any exceptional want of employment, owing to circumstances peculiar to the locality. There are resident squires in each of these two parishes, and on their estates in the severe weather work of some description is found for the men in their employ, and in the same way, as a rule, farm hands are kept employed as far as possible by the farmers. With regard to the parish of Ashley the case is somewhat different. This parish is also agricultural in character; but there is no resident landlord, and but little estate employment. The agricultural depression and consequent want of employment caused many of the labourers to seek work in the neighbouring manufacturing and mining district of North Staffordshire, some of them obtaining regular employment, others only intermittent; these latter obtaining perhaps two or three days a week, thus helping out their home employment, to which they returned when not at work elsewhere. The severe depression in trade has latterly deprived many of these men of this outside employment, and has compelled them to fall back on their native place, creating a surplus of labour, for the employment of which it is difficult to know how to provide. The Relieving Officer informs me that he knows of a dozen of these cases. The severe weather has, of course, temporarily aggravated matters considerably.

Nothing is being done, so far as I have been able to ascertain, either by any public authority or by private effort, to meet the want of employment, whether permanent or temporary only in the district, save as indicated above.

No unemployed register is maintained.

I think that but few need be without employment for a time when work can be resumed on the land; but my information shows that there is, undoubtedly, a considerable amount of labour which is unemployed for a great part of the year. It is a noticeable fact, as will be seen from the table below, that, according to the Census tables, while the population of the two parishes of Mucclestone and Tyrley had, between the years 1881 and 1891, decreased by 54 and 45 respectively, that of Ashley during the same period had decreased but 9. I think that this is to be accounted for principally by the fact that there are a number of small freeholders in the last-named parish, a state of things which does not exist in either of the other parishes; and to some extent by the fact that, while from the parishes of Mucclestone and Tyrley, in common with the generality of rural parishes, many of the younger men have emigrated to the larger towns in search of work, the same class in the parish of Ashley in many cases did not leave their parish entirely, but retained their houses there, although seeking and obtaining work in the neighbouring district of the North Staffordshire Potteries.

(Table above referred to).

Name of Parish.	Population according to the Census of		Decrease.
	1881.	1891.	
Ashley	806	797	9
Mucclestone	763	709	54
Tyrley	766	721	45
TOTAL OF DISTRICT	2,335	2,227	108

BUNTINGFORD RURAL DISTRICT (HERTFORD).

Population (1891), 5,660. Rateable Value (1892–93), £33,079.

Letter from *J. Chalmers-Hunt*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

NO exceptional distress exists in the district.

DOCKING RURAL DISTRICT (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 16,030. Rateable Value (1892–93), £105,659.

Letter from *H. Le Strange*, Chairman, 1st March 1895.

IN this purely agricultural district there is no exceptional distress, other than a slight increase of applications to the Board of Guardians during the late severe weather, which were met by granting some temporary out-relief. Now that the frost is gone there is a better demand for labour.

EAST KERRIER RURAL DISTRICT (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 8,404. Rateable Value (1892–93), £39,481.

Letter from *J. H. Genn*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

1. THERE is not exceptional distress in the district, but a certain amount has been necessarily occasioned by the severe weather.

2. It does not appear to be necessary for the public authorities or voluntary agencies to do anything exceptional to meet the distress.

3. No register is kept.

4. No special suggestions to make.

GLANFORD BRIGG RURAL DISTRICT (PARTS OF LINDSEY).

Population (1891), 23,821. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *F. Hett*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

1. DESTITUTION is prevalent in the district owing to the late frost, but there is no very exceptional distress.

2. Nothing has been done to meet the distress by public authorities. Coals and soup have been somewhat largely distributed in the district by public subscription, and privately.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The Council have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving the distress which, now the frost has broken, is abating.

HOXNE RURAL DISTRICT (EAST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 11,461. Rateable Value (1892-93), £68,868.

Letter from *N. B. Garrard*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

THIS Union being purely agricultural there is a great deal of distress in consequence of the ruinous prices of farm produce. The arable land is going out of cultivation, and the severe weather during the last two months has considerably added to the list of unemployed.

Bread and coals are distributed by private charities in almost every parish in the Union. The District Council have no means of providing work for the unemployed, and to meet the distress the Guardians have been compelled to give out-door relief to the deserving able-bodied poor out of work.

The Council do not maintain an unemployed register.

The Council have no suggestion to offer for the purpose of relieving the distress other than the course which they have adopted.

KINGSWINFORD RURAL DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 20,708. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *H. Webb*, Chairman, 1st March 1895.

THE exceptional distress which has been lately existing in the district is due in a great measure to the very severe and prolonged frost which we have had, though the general depression in the staple trades of this district, namely, the iron and glass trades, has enhanced the distress in a very great measure.

There have been a number of voluntary agencies at work in the district, who have given very great help indeed.

I am now of the opinion that, seeing that the frost has practically gone, there will not be any distress in this district which the Guardians and their officers will not be able to cope with.

MALTON RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 6,934. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *G. S. Cattle*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

THERE has been no extraordinary distress among the working classes in this district.

MIDDLESBROUGH RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 1,605. Rateable Value (1892-93), £24,375.

Letter from *J. J. Dales*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.

NORTON RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, EAST RIDING).

Population (1891), 6,135. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *G. S. Cattle*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

THERE has been no extraordinary distress among the working classes in this district.

ORMSKIRK RURAL DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 25,891. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *A. Dickinson*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

1. THERE has been no exceptional distress, although of course there has been a stoppage of work on account of the severe weather, and naturally some little distress caused thereby.

2. Nothing has been done.

3. No register kept.

4. No suggestions necessary.

OSWESTRY RURAL DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 15,107. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *Edward Jones*, Chairman, 28th February 1895.

OURS is an agricultural district, and there has been some distress through the severe weather and the stoppage of work by the hard frost. This has been voluntarily relieved by individuals all over the parishes, the population not being sufficiently dense to require united action.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

HOLBORN DISTRICT BOARD OF WORKS.

Population (1891), 33,485. Rateable Value (1892-93), £376,687.

Letter from *M. H. Hale*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

1. No exceptional distress in this district has been brought to the notice of the District Board.

2. Consequently nothing has been done by this public authority, and, so far as is known, by voluntary agencies in the district.

3. A register of unemployed is not maintained at this office.

4. This Board has no suggestions to make on the subject.

II.—COUNTY BOROUGHS.

YORK COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 67,907. Rateable Value (1892-93), £238,823.

Letter from *G. McGuire*, Town Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

1. THERE is and has lately been exceptional distress in this district, due to the severe weather.

2. (*a*) The Corporation have to some extent met the distress by engaging extra labour to clear the streets from snow, &c. The total ordinary and special expenditure under this head (street clearing) has amounted to 1,100*l.*, equivalent to a rate of over 1*d.* in the £. (*b*) Various voluntary agencies have distributed relief, and a special relief fund of over 600*l.* has been raised by subscription. The following return represents some of the cases dealt with during the week ended Saturday, the 16th February:—Soup kitchen—(soup costing 2½*d.* per quart, sold at 1*d.*), 1,334 persons; Charity Organisation Society—gifts of money, bread, and coals, 614 persons; Benevolent Society—gifts of bread and coal, 87 persons; Nurses' home—food, dinners, coal, &c., 439 persons; Free breakfasts to children—large number; Engaged on work by Corporation—431 persons.

3. We do not keep an unemployed register, but a list of men applying to the Corporation for work is kept by the City Surveyor.

4. The distress is now abating, and the Lord Mayor has reason to hope that existing relief agencies will be able to cope with it.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Truro Municipal Borough (Cornwall).

Population (1891), 11,131. Rateable Value (1892-93), £32,637.

Letter from *R. Dobell*, Town Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

1. There has been considerable distress in the district, but principally owing to the severe weather.

2. The Mayor started a relief fund which, up to date, has reached over 400*l.*, from which the children of those in distress have had free breakfasts every morning. Soup has been distributed daily; small committees have gone throughout the city and relieved necessitous cases, and now work is being provided in clearing up and repairing footpaths and ways in and about the city.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The matter seems to be well in hand under the control of the Mayor and Relief Committee.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Abercarn Urban District (Monmouth).

Population (1891), 10,464. Assessable Value (1982–93), £34,251.

Letter from *T. S. Edwards*, Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress existing in the district of the Council, arising from depression in trade and the severe weather.

2. Voluntary agencies have been formed in the district for the relief of the distressed.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. The committee of the District Council have instructed their Surveyor to immediately engage upon work upon highways and street-cleansing about half-a-dozen men now unemployed.

I have also been directed to inform you that there are several works upon which men now unemployed could be engaged, such as drainage and new roads in the district, if pecuniary assistance were rendered to the Council by the Government.

Awre Urban District (Gloucester).

Population (1891), 1,148. Assessable Value (1892–93), £4,866.

Letter from *M. F. Carter*, Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

There is no exceptional distress in the district.

Broadstairs and St. Peter's Urban District (Kent).

Population (1891), 5,234. Assessable Value (1892–93), £28,423

Letter from *L. A. Skinner*, Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

There is not any exceptional distress in this district.

I may explain that the Council has throughout the winter, and at the present time, several works in hand, such as the making up of private roads, main sewer extensions, &c., and I think I am correct in saying that these works have given employment to all labourers who were, at the commencement of the winter, out of employment in our district.

Harrow-on-the-Hill Urban District (Middlesex).

Population (1891), 5,725. Assessable Value (1892-93), £39,884.

Letter from *W. J. Overhead*, Chairman, 28th February 1895.

1. There is probably more distress in the district than usual, owing to the severe weather, but it appears to be adequately met without the necessity of exceptional proceedings.

2. Voluntary agencies distribute tickets for food, coals, and money, where required. The number relieved during the week ended the 16th of February cannot be given.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

HEANOR URBAN DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 9,779. Assessable Value (1892-93), £17,780.

Letter from *F. Cattle*, Clerk, 1st March 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. Nothing has been done by the public authorities or by voluntary assistance to meet the distress.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. This being a district where coal-mining is the principal industry, the distress has been less than in most other parts, and no relief has been necessary.

NEWMARKET URBAN DISTRICT (WEST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 6,213. Assessable Value (1892–93), £42,026.

Letter from *J. Rogers*, Chairman, 2nd March 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress in the district.

NEWNHAM URBAN DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 1,401. Assessable Value (1892–93), £5,901.

Letter from *M. F. Carter*, Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.

ROXBY-CUM-RISBY URBAN DISTRICT (PARTS OF LINDSEY).

Population (1891), 392. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *R. Dunkall*, Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

WE have no distress in the district.

WEMBLEY URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 2,903. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *F. G. Seabrook*, Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

THERE was more distress in this district than usual, owing to the severe weather, but it has been relieved by voluntary subscriptions.
I am unable to give you the number relieved during the week ended 16th ultimo.
There has been no register of the unemployed kept.
The Council have no suggestion to offer.

WESTBURY-ON-SEVERN URBAN DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 2,005. Assessable Value (1892–93), £7,759.

Letter from *M. F. Carter*, Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.

WILLENHALL URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 16,852. Assessable Value (1892-93), £28,459.

Letter from *R. Tildesley*, Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

THERE has been a great deal of distress in this town, consequent upon the severe weather.
For the last three weeks voluntary agencies have been distributing soup to 1,500 children weekly, and have been supplying provisions and coal weekly to about 350 families.
We have no unemployed register here, and the public authority has not felt it necessary to adopt any measures for relieving the distress.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

EAST DEAN RURAL DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 20,401. Rateable Value (1892-93), £66,724.

Letter from *M. F. Carter*, Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.

GORING RURAL DISTRICT (OXFORD.)

Population (1891), 2,834. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. Slater*, Chairman, 2nd March 1895.

AN answer has virtually been given by Mr. Willink, the Chairman of the Bradfield Union.

As regards Poor Law relief, there has been no increase of demand upon the rate; but the distress has been very severe, chiefly among those connected with the building trades, and just at the present among all classes of labour, owing to the prevalence of sickness; but it has been greatly alleviated by private charity.

HENDON RURAL DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 7,305. Rateable Value (1892-93), £ ———.

Letter from *F. J. Seabrook*, Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

THERE was more distress in this district than usual, owing to the severity of the weather, but it was relieved by voluntary subscriptions. I am unable to give you the number relieved during the week ended 16th February last.
There has been no register of the unemployed kept.
This council have no suggestion to make for the purpose of relieving the present distress.

LUTON RURAL DISTRICT (BEDFORD).

Population (1891), 8,529. Rateable Value (1892-93), £ ———.

Letter from *E. Barnard*, Chairman, 1st March 1895.

1. IN my opinion, though the weather has been most severe, the distress which has been thereby occasioned can hardly be described as exceptional; and I would add that it has been a matter of surprise to me that indications of what Boards of Guardians usually mean when they speak of "exceptional distress," have been, comparatively, so few.

2. In Luton and in Dunstable, relief funds, presided over (I think) in each case by the Mayor, were started and were the means of alleviating the most needy and pressing cases. In the latter borough considerable sums of money, derived from various charitable bequests, are annually distributed as doles, either in money or in kind. In the country districts the absence of any considerable amount of snow rendered thrashing, and the carting of manure, and other out-door winter work possible. The Relieving Officer's application and report books are not accessible by me just now, but, speaking as Chairman of the Board of Guardians, I believe I am justified in saying that the number of applications for relief has not been abnormally large for the time of year. Several cases, in which old men who would otherwise have struggled along a little longer without becoming chargeable to the rates have been compelled to apply, and have been relieved accordingly, have come before us lately.

3. No register of the unemployed exists in this Union, so far as I know.

4. I do not feel myself competent to suggest a remedy for the exceptional distress which prevails in some parts of the country; but I am watching with some curiosity the proceedings of the Select Committee now sitting to inquire into the subject.

ST. COLUMB MAJOR RURAL DISTRICT (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 11,947. Rateable Value (1892–93), £74,571.

Letter from *J. K. Martyn*, Chairman, 2nd March 1895.

No exceptional distress exists in this district, and at our District Council meeting on Thursday last (28th February) no applicants for employment had been heard of.

TYNEMOUTH RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891),——. Rateable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *A. Whitehorn*, Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

I AM requested by the Chairman of this Council to send you the enclosed reports from the Inspectors in the service of this Council relative to existing distress from want of employment in this district. The two reports cover the whole district.

(Reports above referred to).

(1) Report of Inspector of Northern District.

1. I HAVE made inquiries as to the distress in the several parishes in my district, which you require for the Local Government Board. I find there is no distress in any of the parishes, except in Earsden, Murton, and Willington.

2. The cause of the distress in the two first-named parishes is the scarcity of work at Shire Moor Colliery, and what is being done to meet this distress is by voluntary agencies. They have, and are, providing soup and bread, and some of the miners go round to other colliery villages, where the men are better off, with a waggon collecting eatables, which are liberally supplied by their fellow-labourers, in the shape of loaves of bread, flour, &c., and this is afterwards distributed to the people that are most in want. This is the present state. At Willington the distress is generally due to the severe weather; what is being done is by voluntary agencies; a committee has been formed, and are providing the people with soup and bread, and give the children a free breakfast. Mr. J. H. Burn has contributed in money, which is given to the most distressed by the Vicar, Mr. Robinson. On inquiring yesterday the most of the unemployed are getting back to work again as the weather is improving.

3. No register is maintained in the neighbourhood.

4. No suggestions to make.

(2) Report of Inspector of remainder of District.

1. I HAVE made inquiries as to the amount of exceptional distress in this neighbourhood, which comprises the following villages and colliery places, viz., Gosforth Rows, Long Benton, Bigges Main, Forest Hall, West Moor, Killingworth, Palmersville, Benton Square, Wapping and Willington Rows. The inhabitants of Gosforth Rows are a mixed class, who have come from all parts to get a cheap house to live in; of all kinds of trades and workmen. There are about 17 families depending almost entirely upon charity. The men at Bigges Main are chiefly employed at the shipyards, &c., on the Tyne, but as many of the yards, &c., have been closed, or on short time, for some months, the distress has been serious. There are a few poor people in Long Benton who have to be helped to get along. I have not heard of any particular cases of distress or poverty in Forest Hall. The miners living at West Moor, Killingworth, and Palmersville, are having a hard time, as most of the men get just one or two days' work during the fortnight. Those with large families, although not poverty-stricken, have some difficulty to make ends meet. I understand some of them are now getting 10*s.* or 12*s.* per week from the Miners' Union funds. The miners at Benton Square and Wapping, although very poor, are not in distressed circumstances, as the collieries where they are employed are working short time. The men living at Willington Rows are, when working, employed on Tyneside and at the collieries; at the present time many of them have little or no work, so that their families are in distressed circumstances.

2. Two soup kitchens were opened a few weeks since at Benton and Forest Hall by the Vicar of the parish and Mr. G. W. Dodd, and soup supplied twice a week to families at Gosforth, Benton, Willington Rows, &c. Both money and groceries have been distributed by ladies and gentlemen living in the neighbourhood at Gosforth Rows, as it is supposed the worst cases have been at this place.

3. No register of the unemployed is maintained in this neighbourhood.

4. No suggestions to make.

WINDSOR RURAL DISTRICT (BERKS).

Population (1891), 12,529. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *P. Lovegrove*, Assistant Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

1. THERE has been exceptional distress in the district, caused in the first instance by Thames floods, and afterwards by the exceptionally severe weather, but it is anticipated that there will be plenty of work on the cessation of the frost.

2. The distress has been met, and fairly coped with, by voluntary agencies. The District Council has no means of ascertaining the daily number relieved.

3. No unemployed register maintained.

4. No suggestions to make.

I.—METROPOLIS.—COMMISSIONERS OF SEWERS OF THE CITY OF LONDON.

Population (1891), 37,705. Rateable Value (1892-93), £4,162,575.

Letter from *H. Blake*, Principal Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

I AM directed by the Streets Committee of the Court of Sewers, who have had the matter under consideration, to acquaint you, for the information of the Local Government Board, that, in addition to maintaining their own large staff of about 800 workers through the winter, they have employed 1,698 extra men in clearing snow, &c.

The Commissioners of Sewers are not an authority having any legal power to deal with distress, beyond giving work, so far as it may fairly be done in the interest of the ratepayers.

II.—COUNTY BOROUGHS.

READING COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 60,054. Rateable Value (1892-93), £268,757.

Letter from *H. Day*, Town Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

ADVERTING to my letter to you of the 25th ultimo on the above subject, I beg leave to send an extract from a report made since the date of that letter by the Waterworks Manager to the Waterworks Committee of the Council, which gives further explanations as to employment provided in this borough for the purpose of supplying inhabitants with water during the frost.

(Extract above referred to).

"27 February 1895.

"Fully realising from previous experience the great inconvenience caused to consumers by frozen services, supply by standpipes and vans was commenced on Friday, the 1st instant, the number being gradually increased as cases of no supply became known, until the number of standpipes and vans, together with men and horses, has far exceeded any previous record. At present the town is divided into 30 districts, supplied by means of 128 men, 16 water-vans, 5 water-carts, and 10 standpipes, the greater portion of the men coming from the ranks of the unemployed, who are selected from the stone-breakers and alternately changed."

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

CHATHAM MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (KENT).

Population (1891), 31,657. Rateable Value (1892-93), £ 107,282.

Letter from *H. P. Mann*, Town Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

IN this borough there is not and has not been that exceptional distress that has prevailed in many districts, as the large Government establishments keep most of the artisans employed throughout the year; but the ordinary out-door mechanics, such as bricklayers, carpenters, labourers, &c., and men employed on the river, have been, through the severe weather, unable to follow their employment, and this has caused considerable distress.

To meet the distress the Mayor convened a public meeting of the inhabitants, and opened a subscription list, which was readily and liberally responded to, with the result that the town was divided into three parts corresponding to its wards, with a separate committee for each, and relief, consisting of bread, flour, coals, groceries, and soup, was distributed. The average daily number relieved by these three committees during the week ended Saturday, the 16th of February, was about 350, and during the weeks ended the 23rd February and 2nd March about 430 and 100. In addition to the relief above-mentioned, free breakfasts were given to 400 or 500 children every morning for a fortnight, and free dinners have been given by a separate agency for some weeks past to about 300 children, consisting of soup and bread.

There is no unemployed register maintained in this borough.

Besides

Besides the direct relief of distress above-mentioned, work was found during the severe weather for 70 or 80 men weekly, in clearing away the snow in the borough. As a permanently profitable mode of relieving distress and setting to work a portion of the unemployed class upon work which would not compete with that of other labourers at present in employment, I beg to suggest that the embanking of rivers and the reclamation of large tracts of marsh and waste land at the Imperial expense would be profitable to the State, as it would increase the area of the useful land of the country. Before the land was reclaimed it should be absolutely purchased by the State or by the County Council or other public authority, and when reclaimed, should, I think, be disposed of at the best price that could be obtained for it, so that it might again pass into private hands. There are large tracts of land on the Medway that might be so reclaimed.

LAUNCESTON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 4,345. Rateable Value (1892–93), £13,913.

Letter from *J. Kitlow*, Mayor, 2nd March 1895.

1. THERE has been some exceptional distress in this town, owing principally to the severity of the weather.

2. A voluntary relief fund has been started, by which about 200 families were assisted in fourteen days with coals, groceries, and other provisions.

3. No unemployed register.

4. No suggestions to make.

SOUTHPORT MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (LANCASTER.)

Population (1891), 41,406. Rateable Value (1892–93), £258,861.

Letter from *J. Wood*, Mayor, 4th March 1895.

1. THERE has been a certain amount of exceptional distress in this district owing to the recent severe weather. I have placed myself in communication with the Secretary of the Provident Society, and also the President of the Southport and District United Trades Council, and I send you herewith copies of the letters I have received from them.

2. In addition to the Provident Society, various soup-kitchens have been established, but I am not able to state the average daily number of persons relieved during the week ended the 16th ultimo.

3. There is no general unemployed register kept, but I learn from the Borough Engineer that he has received 84 applications for work, which he has not been able to accede to (there being no vacancies).

4. I have no further means to suggest for relieving the said distress over and above the means already made use of as appearing herein and in the enclosures herewith.

(Letters above referred to).

Southport and Birkdale Provident Society, 26th February, 1895.

THERE has been a good deal of distress during the severe frost from want of employment, but as soon as the weather allows I expect there will be no want of work for all those who will work. I find there are always a number in a destitute condition from the following causes :—laziness, intemperance, bad workmen, or sickness. I may say during the past fourteen days or so our Society has relieved over 1,000 families, very nearly all being in distress through the frost merely.

(signed) *I. Halsall.*

Southport and District United Trades Council, 2nd March, 1895.

IN answer to your inquiry I have to say that, during the last two months, there has been considerable distress in this district, but this has been nearly wholly caused by the severe weather. All sections of the building trade were of course stopped, and persons who earn their living by catering to the working classes were necessarily also seriously affected. The methods to cope with the distress were various but effective, the public having responded in a most liberal manner to the appeals made to them. From 3,000 to 4,000 persons per day have during the last three or four weeks received ample food—soup, groceries, &c.—from the numerous soup-kitchens, and grants of money have in many cases been given. It is fair to say that ordinarily there is very little genuine distress in this district through lack of employment. For some years past the Corporation have been carrying on extensive foreshore improvements, and as these are only pursued during the winter months employment is thus given to a considerable number of men thrown out of work in various occupations. Thus, at the present moment, out of 140 men employed in this work, 1 has been a sailor ; 5 gangers ; 89 labourers ; 10 fishermen ; 1 bricklayer ; 3 navvies ; 6 carters ; 1 cartwright ; 1 wheelwright ; 5 cab-drivers ; 1 farmer ; 1 packer ; 2 bakers ; 2 ex-soldiers ; 1 plumber ; 4 gardeners ; 1 whitesmith ; 1 butcher ; 3 painters ; 1 porter ; and 1 pavior. These men receive 21*s.* per week of 49 hours. A number of men have also been employed by the electrical department on exactly the same conditions, the various occupations being also quite as mixed. Of course, all these men—quite 200 in all—were thrown out of work by the severe weather. Altogether we have every reason to be satisfied in Southport with the admirable manner in which the Corporation deals with the unemployed, it always being ready to strain a point to assist them. As a consequence, this difficult problem is reduced to the least possible dimensions. In addition to this, the Corporation has given out the police and official uniforms during the winter, thus finding work for a number of tailors ; efforts are also being directed to having some of the public buildings painted.

(signed) *T. R. Threlfall.*

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Barnes Urban District (Surrey).

Population (1891), 14,673. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *S. W. Lambert*, Chairman, 4th March 1895.

I made inquiries of the Inspector of Barnes in the district, and of the Rector of Barnes and Vicar of Mortlake, the two parishes forming the district of this Council, as also of the Relieving Officer.

The Barnes Inspector sent in no written report, but informed the Clerk of the Council that there had been exceptional distress, and also that since the riots some few years back in Trafalgar Square a register for the unemployed had been kept at the Barnes Police Station, but that not a single entry had ever been made in it, this no doubt from the dislike of the unemployed having to make any applications to the police.

The answers I received from the Rector of Barnes, the Vicar of Mortlake, and the Relieving Officer to the several questions are enclosed.

(Answers above referred to).

(1.)

1. There has been much distress, but this has been almost entirely caused by the recent severe weather.

2. Extra help has been largely given through the District Visitors. There has been special distribution of sacks of coals, food tickets, &c., to all the most destitute. Children's dinners are given twice a week, and the soup-kitchen is open daily. Average relieved daily at the soup-kitchen, 250.

3. No unemployed register kept, but the District Visitors are instructed to send in to me a list of "unemployed," that I may endeavour to get work for them.

4. Possibly relief works might be started with advantage if a grant in aid could be made to the local authority.

(signed) *B. M. Kitson*, Rector of Barnes.

(2.)

1. There is exceptional distress owing to the severe weather, by which so many men have been thrown out of work.

2. The Board of Guardians have opened a labour yard. There is a Philanthropic Society in the Parish of Mortlake with the said Urban District Council which has been affording relief. The clergy with their workers have been relieving the distress by means of soup-kitchens, supplies of coal, and a large increase in the distribution of meat and grocery tickets. Four times a week bread has been given away, and free breakfasts given to the infant children attending the National Schools. I am unable to state the average daily number relieved in Mortlake Parish.

3. No unemployed register kept, that I am aware of.

4. The distress being caused by the exceptional character of the weather, it will probably pass away when the weather changes and work can be resumed. Exceptional measures of relief will then be no longer necessary.

(signed) *A. S. Shuttle*, Vicar of Mortlake.

(3.)

1. I beg to state that undoubtedly there has been exceptional distress in the district, both due to the locality and severe weather, as the market garden labourers and those working on the roads and river, and in addition the building trades, have not been able to work during the whole of the present month (February).

2. In the Parish of Mortlake, where I found the greatest amount of distress, there has been a great deal of charity—first, the Philanthropic Society has been sitting daily, from 10 to 12 in the forenoon, to receive applications and relieve deserving cases, and up to Saturday last assisted upwards of 150 cases; secondly, the labour yard at the workhouse has been opened for the unemployed; and, thirdly, there have been soup-kitchens and a good supply of coal tickets distributed.

3. There is no unemployed register in the district.

4. I think that all possible steps have been taken to relieve the acute distress, and with such timely aid a great amount of privation has been saved.

(signed) *A. G. Pratt*, Relieving Officer.

Ham Urban District (Surrey).

Population (1891), ———. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *H. J. Manning*, Clerk, 4th March 1895.

(1.) There has been exceptional distress in the district during this winter, and it is almost entirely owing to the severe weather. The district comprises a large proportion of agricultural land and market gardens, in which work cannot be done during severe frost. Most of the unemployed (of whom there were about 80 during the week ended 16th February) were labourers on the farms and in the market gardens, and there were also some bricklayers and others employed in building who were thrown out of work. The want of employment is only temporary.

(2.) The

(2.) The Council have been, and still are, giving work to the unemployed in digging gravel in readiness for the repair of the roads when required. There are several voluntary agencies for relief of the distress. The public soup-kitchen is supported by voluntary contribution. Soup, with bread, is distributed twice a week; from one to three quarts of soup according to the number in family, and bread in proportion. The average number of applicants is from 30 to 40. The local coal club is also supported by voluntary contribution. The subscriptions this winter have amounted to 37*l.* 10*s.*, and coals have been distributed every three weeks. In addition to the public soup-kitchen there are two which are conducted privately, from one of which from 100 to 140 quarts of soup, with bread, are distributed twice a week, and from the other about seven gallons once a week. There have also been many private gifts; for instance, one gentleman gave to each of 46 families a quartern loaf a day for a week, half a pound of tea, 1 lb. of sugar, half a sack of coal, and a sack of coke. Others have given bread, coals, and coke, and money.

(3.) There is no unemployed register kept.

(4.) The Chairman has no suggestions to make as to the relief of the distress, which, in his opinion, is of a temporary nature, and will disappear with the abatement of the severe weather.

Shipley Urban District (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 23,387. Assessable Value (1892–93), £ 81,304.

Letter from *C. B. Shaw*, Chairman, 4th March 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in the town, in the main due to the severe weather, stone-quarrying being extensively carried on in this district; a large number of men have been out of employment since Christmas, and where there are no members of the family employed in the factories and at other in-door employment, they feel the pinch very much.

2. The District Council have found employment for about 300 men by engaging 100 men each shift of two days per week in forming a new cemetery. A public relief committee has been formed, and the number of families relieved during the week ended 16th February would be about 300, in addition to the distribution of soup from several centres.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. After the frost is gone I do not think there will be many willing workers out of employment. At present there is no need for any person to starve.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

East Retford Rural District (Nottingham).

Population (1891), 13,978. Rateable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *T. W. Denman*, Clerk, 4th March 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in the district.

2. It follows from the above answer that the authorities have not done anything in the matter.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. It follows from the answer to Question 1 that the Chairman has not any suggestions to make.

I may add that there has been a considerable number of unemployed in the Urban District of East Retford, and that this distress has been mitigated by liberal subscriptions raised in the town, and administered in the form of gifts of bread and coal and the institution of a soup kitchen, under the directions of a committee. But this, of course, is not within the area or duties of the Rural District Council.

Lichfield Rural District (Stafford).

Population (1891), 23,011. Rateable Value (1892–93), £ 155,054.

Letter from *J. Derry*, Clerk, 4th March 1895.

1. There has been no exceptional distress in this district beyond such as has been caused by the severity of the weather.

2. Much has been done by voluntary agency to meet the distress in the district. The charity being private, there is no data to be obtained.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained in the district.

4. This Council have no suggestions to offer on the subject.

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME RURAL DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 6,174. Rateable Value (1892–93), £48,563.

Letter from *J. Knight*, Clerk, 4th March 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress in the district, and there is no employment register maintained.

ROMNEY MARSH RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 2,893. Rateable Value (1892–93), £49,245.

Letter from *J. Humphery*, Clerk, 4th March 1895.

THIS Council believes that distress has to some extent prevailed in the district owing to the long-continued severity of the weather, but that it has been fairly met by private agencies. No unemployed register is kept, nor would any, in their opinion, be required, if the farming interests were not, as at present, in a state of hopeless bankruptcy.

STRATFORD-ON-AVON RURAL DISTRICT (WARWICK).

Population (1891), 11,507. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. C. Warden*, Clerk, 4th March 1895.

ALTHOUGH in consequence of the severity of the weather the distress arising therefrom is more acute, it is not exceptional in this district, and works of relief are not contemplated or necessary.

UPTON-UPON-SEVERN RURAL DISTRICT (WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 17,359. Rateable Value (1892–93), £110,858.

Letter from *G. Powell*, Clerk, 4th March 1895.

NO exceptional distress appears to prevail in this district, and no action has been found necessary to be taken by the Council.

WHITBY RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 9,306. Rateable Value (1892–93), £56,572.

Letter from *W. S. Gray*, Clerk, 4th March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, and the Council have not been called upon to meet distress arising from "want of employment." The surplus labouring population, who, two or three years ago, were thrown out of employment by reason of the closing of iron mines and the stoppage of iron works, have left the neighbourhood.

YARDLEY RURAL DISTRICT (WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 17,141. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. Malins*, Chairman, 2nd March 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in a part of this district and parish of 20,000 inhabitants, and it is wholly due to the severe weather, as a large number of the working people are brick-makers, bricklayers, and builders in this rapidly growing suburb of Birmingham.

2. A committee of the Guardians now meet within the parish, so that applicants have not to go so far for relief; but the bulk of the relief is by voluntary effort, and probably families representing 1,000 souls have received such relief during the week ended 16th February.

3. No unemployed register is kept, as it would avail little.

4. The causes of distress will largely disappear as the mildness of the weather increases.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

Hackney Parish.

Population (1891), 198,606. Rateable Value (1892–93), £973,578.

Letter from *G. Grocott*, Vestry Clerk, 5th March 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in the parish. There are no special trades peculiar to the parish, but the shoe and cabinet trades carried on in this and the surrounding district has for a considerable time been in a very depressed condition, and Hackney shares with the East End districts in the general depression. The report of the Labour Bureau shows that there is a large number of unskilled labourers out of work in the parish. This proportion arises partly from the character of the property in the extreme east of the district (which also applies to the greater portion of the east of London), partly from causes that have not been traced, and partly owing to the recent severity of the weather.

2. The Hackney Vestry have given employment to 2,800 men in clearing snow from the highways, and 170 men have been engaged on extra cleaning of roads. The Hackney Vestry have also employed 560 men in the stoneyards since the opening of their Labour Bureau on the 17th January; 30 men have also been employed painting water carts and vans. The whole of these men have had an average of three days' work each. The committee of the Vestry are not able to give the average daily number of persons assisted; but information has been received from several of the voluntary agencies in the parish, which shows that a large number of distressed persons have been relieved, but there are many other charitable agencies of which the committee can give no information at present. A very great amount of good is being done by charitably-disposed persons and by voluntary agencies, but there is still a very large amount of distress which these voluntary agencies do not appear to touch. A joint committee of members of the Board of Guardians and of the Vestry recently appointed, to consider what steps could be taken by the two Boards to deal with the unemployed, resolved themselves into a voluntary committee to collect funds for the purpose of giving breakfasts and dinners to the unemployed and their families, whose names were upon the Bureau list, and that special committee have been able to give 400 meals per day, from the commencement of the fund until the present time.

3. An unemployed register is maintained. Two thousand and eighty three names have been registered from the 17th January to the 25th February (1,911 married, 172 single) = 34 days at 61 per day, of whom 644 are skilled artizans and 1,164 unskilled, as against 1,400 names registered last year from the 6th November 1893 to the 7th March 1894 = 83 days at 17 per day, of whom 641 were skilled artizans and 759 unskilled. Work has been found by the Vestry for 3,560 men for three days each, extending over a period of six weeks, at a cost of nearly 3,000*l*. Permanent work has been found other than by the Vestry for 40 men, as against 17 last year.

4. The matter will be further considered by the Vestry during the week, and a communication sent to you thereon.

Whitechapel District Board of Works.

Population (1891), 73,552. Rateable Value (1892–93), £409,278.

Letter from *A. Turner*, Clerk, 5th March 1895.

Men have been employed by the Board as sweepers, but there has been no exceptional demand for labour at the works of the Board, and on certain days of pressure, for removal of snow, a number of men that could have been employed failed to turn up.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Abersychan Urban District (Monmouth).

Population (1891), 15,296. Assessable Value (1892–93), £37,190.

Letter from *W. Lewis*, Chairman, 4th March 1895.

The distress in the district has been of a very acute character arising through the stoppage of local ironworks. Private efforts have largely relieved the sufferings of the unemployed and their families. Our Council has given work, in the form of stone-breaking, to several men who otherwise would have remained in enforced idleness. We are also projecting a new road, tenders for which now appear in the district papers. I believe an instruction will be given to the contractor to employ as many as is possible of these men who have nothing to do; and with the breaking up of the hard and frosty weather, we may reasonably anticipate a resumption of out-door labour and the minimising of the hardships of cold and hunger, through which so many of the toiling class have gone.

GRAYS THURROCK URBAN DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 12,219. Assessable Value (1892–93), £25,841.

Letter from *C. E. Hatten*, Clerk, 2nd March 1895.

REFERRING to the Circular Letter of the 19th February with reference to distress from want of employment, and which was replied to by the Chairman of the Grays Thurrock Urban District Council on the 28th February last, I am desired by him to state that when he wrote he had not before him the Circular Letter, and therefore omitted to reply to the third question contained in the Circular.

About two years ago the Grays Thurrock Local Board directed me, as clerk, to keep a register of any persons who required employment, with details of the class of work which they could perform. About 19 men entered their names in the register, the Local Board having first advertised that they could do so; but no employer of labour, either in or out of the district, ever called to inspect it, or, as far as I know, availed themselves of the information contained therein.

GUNTHWAITE AND INGBIRCHWORTH URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 389. Assessable Value (1892–93), £1,132.

Letter from *A. Hawes*, Clerk, 5th March 1895.

1. THERE are undoubtedly cases of great distress in the district, which are due rather to the depressed state of the iron and steel trade than to the severe weather, although, of course, the latter has increased the hardships experienced by those out of employment.

2. Many of the ironworkers have sought help from the Guardians, and they have been employed at breaking dross at the workhouse. No further steps have been taken to relieve the distress in the district, but help has been afforded by private agencies to many. There is now a prospect of the steel works here resuming work, and in that event the need for exceptional measures being taken will disappear.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained in the district.

4. No suggestions to make.

WROTHAM URBAN DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 3,437. Assessable Value (1892–93), £11,638.

Letter from *G. F. Carnell*, Clerk, 5th March 1895.

1. THERE is no more exceptional distress in the district than other parts of the country.

2. The Council instructed their Surveyor to get in a sufficient quantity of stone to provide work for the unemployed.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

LLANFYRNACH RURAL DISTRICT (PEMBROKE).

Population (1891), 2,613. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *E. Thomas*, Chairman, 2nd March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.

STEYNING EAST RURAL DISTRICT (EAST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 6,137. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *E. Cripps*, Clerk, 5th March 1895.

1. THERE has been no exceptional distress except such as is due to the severe weather, and even this not to a great extent.

2. The distress has been met by private charity, unorganised, and therefore no information can be given as to the number relieved. There were six able-bodied men relieved by 5*s.* 6*d.* each in kind on the 19th February, and reported to your Honourable Board by the Guardians. There has been no renewal of such application.

3. No register kept.

4. Distress at an end as soon as frost breaks.

STEYNING WEST RURAL DISTRICT (WEST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 10,735. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *E. Cripps*, Clerk, 5th March 1895.

1. THERE has been no exceptional distress except such as is due to the severe weather, and even this not to a great extent.

2. The distress has been met by private charity, unorganised, and therefore no information can be given as to the number relieved There were two able-bodied men relieved by 5*s.* 6*d.* each in kind on the 19th February, and reported to your Honourable Board by the Guardians. There has been no renewal of such application.

3. No register kept.

4. Distress at an end as soon as frost breaks.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

POPLAR DISTRICT BOARD OF WORKS.

Population (1891), 166,748. Rateable Value (1892–93), £701,405.

Letter from *W. H. Farnfield*, Clerk, 5th March 1895.

I SEND you further report of the Controller on this subject made up to last evening (4th March).

(Report above referred to).

RETURN of money expended in Extra Labour up to and including Saturday, the 2nd March.

SNOW REMOVAL AND ROAD SWEEPING.

	Number of Men.				
	Poplar.	Bow.	Bromley.	Total.	£. s. d.
20 February 1895	90	94	99	283	56 12 –
21 „ „	71	70	62	203	40 12 –
22 „ „	68	68	70	206	41 4 –
23 „ „	74	70	71	215	43 – –
25 „ „	45	51	48	144	28 16 –
26 „ „	44	48	41	133	26 12 –
27 „ „	47	45	44	136	27 4 –
28 „ „	45	48	38	131	26 4 –
1 March „	34	34	26	94	18 16 –
2 „ „	30	27	31	88	17 12 –
	548	555	530	1,633	326 12 –

Report—*continued.*

STONE BREAKING AT BOARD'S DEPÔT.

	Number of Men.	Number of Yards.		Day Work.		
				Number of Men.	Rate.	
			£. s. d.		s. d.	£. s. d.
19 February 1895 - -	48	48	9 12 –	4	4 –	– 16 –
20 „ „ - -	53	52½	10 10 –	3	4 –	– 12 –
21 „ „ - -	39	38½	7 14 –	1½	4 –	– 6 –
22 „ „ - -	45	45	9 – –	2	4 –	– 8 –
23 „ „ - -	40	40	8 – –	5	4 –	1 – –
25 „ „ - -	16	16	3 4 –	2	4 –	– 8 –
26 „ „ - -	17	17	3 8 –	2	4 –	– 8 –
27 „ „ - -	24	24	4 16 –	3	4 –	– 12 –
28 „ „ - -	25	25	5 – –	2	4 –	– 8 –
1 March „ - -	19	19	3 16 –	1	4 –	– 4 –
2 „ „ - -	24	24	4 16 –	2	4 –	– 8 0
	350	349	69 16 -	27½		5 10 –

STONE BREAKING AT ROSS'S WHARF.

	Number of Men.	Number of Yards.		Day Work.		
				Number of Men.	Rate.	
			£. s. d.		s. d.	£. s. d.
19 February 1895 - -	57	57	11 8 –	11	4 –	2 4 –
20 „ „ - -	19	19	3 16 –	5	4 –	1 – –
21 „ „ - -	—	—	- -	5	4 –	1 – –
22 „ „ - -	—	—	- -	5	4 –	1 – –
23 „ „ - -	—	—	- -	1 man 6½ days.	7 6	2 8 9
	76	76	15 4 –			7 12 9

From the date of the opening of the labour yards by the Guardians of the Poplar Union, the pressure at the Board's depôts became less severe. This becoming apparent, the number of post-cards sent out was reduced on the 20th ultimo for the 21st, from 300 to 225, this again was reduced on the 23rd for the 25th, to 150, and on the 28th for the 1st March, to 105. At the end of the week, viz., on the 2nd instant, the severe frost having almost completely given way, enabling building and other works to be resumed, it was felt that the necessity for the Board continuing its extraordinary relief work had passed, and it has accordingly been discontinued. The amount paid in wages, as shown by the last return, was 1,211*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.* The amount set out in this statement is 424*l.* 14*s.* 9*d.*; the total expenditure has therefore been 1,635*l.* 16*s.* 3*d.*, divided as follows: for road cleansing, 1,419*l.* 3*s.*; for stone breaking, 216*l.* 13*s.* 3*d.* A fall of snow having occurred during the night of the 4th instant, the following men have been engaged to-day:—Poplar, 90; Bow, 122; Bromley, 160; Total, 372: 74*l.* 8*s.*

5 March 1895. (signed) *Leonard Potts*, Controller.

ST. MARYLEBONE PARISH.

Population (1891), 142,404. Rateable Value (1892–93), £1,521,668.

Letter from *W. H. Garbutt*, Vestry Clerk, 5th March 1895.

1. THERE is additional distress in the district, but it is not due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, but to the unusual severity of the weather.

2. The Vestry, as in former years, have arranged the parish work so as to give the maximum possible employment in winter, but, in the opinion of the Vestry, the main question of the "Unemployed" of London is a matter to be dealt with by the Imperial Legislature. Employment is now being given in the Vestry's sewers department to 12 of the "Unemployed", and the Vestry have authorised the immediate expenditure of 500*l.* upon sewer works, in order to further assist the unemployed, by increasing the number engaged thereon to 20.

3. An "Unemployed" register is maintained, and is found useful when extra labour is required for parochial purposes.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Knighton Urban District (Radnor).

Population (1891), 1,813. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *W. A. Collins*, Clerk, 6th March 1895.

1. Although many men are out of employment, owing to the severity of the weather, there has not been much exceptional distress.

2. No action has been necessary on the part of this authority; but voluntary relief, in the shape of coal and soup, has been given, but no record kept of the number relieved.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The Chairman has no suggestion to make.

Sandown Urban District (Isle of Wight).

Population (1891), 3,582. Assessable Value (1892–93), £19,055.

Letter from *W. H. Wooldridge*, Clerk, 6th March 1895.

There is no very great amount of exceptional distress in this district; but with a view of assisting such of the inhabitants as are unemployed, works have been started for repairing damage done to the groynes on the shore and to the Esplanade by the recent storms.

There is no register of unemployed kept.

In this small district my Council have no suggestion to make on the subject.

Wallsend Urban District (Northumberland).

Population (1891), 11,257. Assessable Value (1892–93), £38,326.

Letter from *W. S. Daglish*, Clerk, 5th March 1895.

1. The Council consider that the severe weather is the main cause of the distress. It has also been augmented by the fact of the removal from the district of trade in the chemical and aluminium manufactures, and also by the slackness of trade in the shipbuilding works.

2. The Council have ordered 200 tons of stone, and they have given employment to a dozen men, who are engaged in breaking the stones. Voluntary Agencies.—Two voluntary organisations have been working, one of them during the past seven weeks, for the relief of the distress. Free dinners have been provided for an average number of 500 per day. On Sundays, breakfasts have been given instead of dinners. The other organisation for adult relief has been in operation for the last three weeks; 178 families have been thus relieved weekly by the distribution of parcels of goods of the value of 2*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* each; and these means of alleviating the distress have been aided by all classes. These committees find that as the mildness of the weather increases, the applications for relief are becoming less frequent, and it is hoped that after another week or two the exceptional relief will not be required.

3. No official register is kept, but at an establishment called the Café, Wallsend, a register is kept for those who wish for relief.

4. The matter was fully discussed by the Council, but they consider that no public works can be undertaken at the present time, and they are unable to make any suggestions.

Walthamstow Urban District (Essex).

Population (1891), 46,346. Assessable Value (1892–93), £126,572.

Letter from *G. Houghton*, Clerk, 6th March 1895.

There has undoubtedly been exceptional distress in the district during the last few weeks, but it has been mainly caused by the recent severe frost. With a return to milder weather, the distress has become much less acute.

During the last month the Council have employed about 650 extra labourers, in addition to their ordinary staff, in removing snow, &c. The undermentioned works are now in progress in the district, representing an expenditure of 3,677*l.*: Private Street Improvements, 3,000*l.*; Street Crossings, 150*l.*; Sewerage Works, 300*l.*; Fencing, 227*l.* And the following additional works will be commenced within the next two months: Private Street Improvements, 5,125*l.*: Paving Footpaths, 65*l.*; Sewerage, 1,380*l.*; Fencing, 132*l.*: Total, 6,702*l.* The East London Water Works Company have just commenced the construction of two large reservoirs in this district, which will give employment to several hundreds of labourers. A number of voluntary agencies were engaged during the frost in distributing food and firing, and I enclose a statement of the relief given by several of these agencies.

An unemployed register has just been instituted by the Council. (Statement

(Statement before referred to).

Relief given by Voluntary Agencies during the Month of February, 1895.

Walthamstow Benevolent Fund.—Relief given in food and firing to 3,344 adults and 5,399 children, at a cost of 269*l.* 5*s.* 3*d.* This is a permanently established fund controlled by a representative committee elected annually. Salvation Army.—Three thousand four hundred and twenty-two meals given to children, 700 meals given to adults, in addition to a distribution of food and coals. This relief was provided for by a special fund raised by subscription in the district. St. Andrew's Hall.—Eight hundred dinners to children. Folkestone Hall.—Distribution of soup twice weekly at a charge of 1*d.* per quart. A permanent relief fund is attached to this mission. Marsh-street Congregational Church.—Seven hundred quarts of soup and 500 lbs. of bread have been distributed. A permanent relief fund is attached to this mission. Note.—There are other agencies existing, but particulars of these have not yet been received.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

Barton-upon-Irwell Rural District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), ———. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. W. Whitworth*, Clerk, 6th March 1895.

The Guardians of the Barton-upon-Irwell Union and the Rural District Council had a conference on Wednesday last, and also had before them the Relieving Officers, and questioned them as to the increase (if any) in the applications for relief which had been made to them consequent upon the prevailing frost.

The Guardians elicited from these officers the fact that 28 applications had been made to them from able-bodied persons, 20, however, of which were on account of sickness, the remaining eight for want of employment. The last-named were relieved by the Relieving Officers under the out-door labour test.

It was also stated by several of the Guardians and the Relieving Officers that the voluntary agencies which had been started throughout this Union had been able to cope with any exceptional distress in the different localities; and the Guardians and the members of the Rural District Council were of opinion that it was not necessary, at this stage at all events, to adopt any special measures for the relief of those at present out of employment.

Bridport Rural District (Dorset).

Population (1891), 7,427. Rateable Value (1892–93), £52,132.

Letter from *J. J. Roper*, Clerk, 5th March 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in this district.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

Erpingham Rural District (Norfolk).

Population (1891), 16,575. Rateable Value (1892–93), £86,109.

Letter from *G. Wilkinson*, Chairman, 4th March 1895.

1. No exceptional distress.
2. Nothing required.
3. No unemployed register kept.
4. No suggestions to make.

Hastings Rural District (East Sussex).

Population (1891), 11,243. Rateable Value (1892-93), £54,792.

Letter from *A. R. Inskipp*, Clerk, 7th March 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress, believed to be largely owing to the severe weather.

2. No special steps are being taken by public authorities, but voluntary agencies are doing a good deal to meet the distress. The average daily number relieved by the three chief agencies during the week ended the 16th February was: Charitable Organisation Society, 24; Ore Relief Committee, 52; Silverhill Relief Committee, 70. With reference to the work of voluntary agencies, I beg to enclose for the information of the Board copies of letters which the Council have received from the secretaries of the several agencies at work in the district.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. No suggestions to make. The Council consider that the existing agencies are sufficient to deal with the existing distress.

(Letters

(Letters before referred to).

The Hastings and St. Leonards Association for organising Charitable Relief and Repressing Mendicity.

6 March 1895.

I beg to state that for the week ended 16th February, this association relieved 103 families at Ore and 42 at Silverhill, each family receiving bread and grocery value 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* We have also distributed packets of lentils for soup, clothing and coal. Of course, there have been other agencies at work, or it would have been impossible to cope with the distress existing in the district in an adequate manner. I may add that there is still a great deal of distress to be dealt with.

(signed) *Lionel H. Elford.*

Silverhill, 1 March 1895.

The committee of which I am the Chairman have for some time past distributed soup and bread, and during the week ended 16th February distributed, on an average, 195 quarts of soup and 80 loaves (20 gallons) of bread per day. This was distributed to about 70 families daily ; but the following week we were enabled, by the liberal response of the public, to relieve upwards of 100 families with grocery, meat, and coals, to the value of 6*s.* 6*d.* each, in addition to 220 quarts of soup and 80 loaves of bread per day to about 90 to 100 families per day. This was needed the week ended 16th February just as much, but having insufficient funds we were unable to do it. I know the Charitable Organisation Society did excellent work here, and doubtless Mr. Elford will be able to furnish statistics.

(signed) *William F. Balding.*

Ore, 1 March 1895.

On the 30th January last a small committee was formed for the purpose of dealing with cases of distress within this parish. Until a few days ago we met daily and issued tickets for coal and grocery to those who were in want; this week, owing to the falling off of funds, we have been only able to meet once. The daily average for the week you mention is about 52. During the past few weeks two soup kitchens have been supplying soup free three times a week, quantity supplied about 170 gallons (the two) per day. The Charitable Organisation Society also help us largely. I believe that upwards of 100 cases were relieved week ended 16th February, chiefly bread and grocery orders, value 2*s.* 6*d.* each. Free teas have also been provided by religious bodies for the unemployed, and they have also helped in minor ways.

(signed) *J. Edward Carter.*

MEDWAY RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 237. Rateable Value (1892–93), £2,376.

Letter from *A. R. Norman*, Clerk, 6th March 1895.

1. THERE has been some exceptional distress in the district owing to the prolonged frost, and not due to any circumstances peculiar to the locality.

2. The distress was dealt with by voluntary agency. I am unable to give the numbers relieved during the week ended Saturday, the 16th February, as the cases were dealt with in the adjoining districts of Gillingham and Chatham.

3. There is no unemployed register in the district.

4. The Council have no suggestions to make to relieve such distress other than to leave it to voluntary agencies.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

CHELSEA PARISH.

Population (1891), 96,253. Rateable Value, (1892–93), £712,515.

Letter from *T. Holland*, Vestry Clerk, 6th March 1895.

ADVERTING to my letter of the 27th ultimo forwarding replies to the queries contained in the Board's communication of the 19th February, I am directed to state, with regard to the reply to Question No. 3, that in consequence of the paucity of applications for labour, the Vestry have resolved to close the Labour Bureau from the 25th instant.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

LUDLOW MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SALOP).

Population (1891), 4,460. Rateable Value (1892–93), £15,183.

Letter from *J. H. Williams*, Town Clerk, 7th March 1895.

I READ your circular of the 19th February, and my answer thereto of the 21st February, at the Town Council meeting this day held, when I was instructed to inform the Local Government Board that had the Corporation scheme for the better sewerage of the town and the disposal of the sewage met with the approval of the Local Government Board, the Corporation would then have had the opportunity of employing a large number of labourers at remunerative wages, which no doubt would have done much to alleviate the exceptional distress.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Standish-with-Langtree Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 5,416. Assessable Value (1892–93), £19,358.

Letter from *W. H. Hewlett*, Chairman, 6th March 1895.

1 and 2. In the opinion of the Council there is no distress, arising from want of employment, of such an aggravated or exceptional nature as to demand anything exceptional in the form of relief agencies.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

Ashby-de-la-Zouch Rural District (Leicester).

Population (1891), 10,383. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. H. Joyce*, Chairman, 7th March 1895.

1. No exceptional distress. During the severe frost bricklayers and their labourers were out of work, but these have been busy as can be since the thaw set in.

2. Nothing has been done.

4. No suggestions to make.

Bedale Rural District (York, North Riding).

Population (1891), 7,147. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *E. D. Swarbreck*, Clerk, 7th March 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. No extraordinary measures have been taken, because none have been required. The number of casual paupers passing through the district has been rather less than usual.

3. No register of unemployed is maintained.

4. No suggestions to make.

Dunmow Rural District (Essex).

Population (1891), 16,674. Rateable Value (1892–93), £73,482.

Letter from *F. J. Snell*, Clerk, 7th March 1895.

The numbers of our in-door and out-door paupers only show a slight increase on several previous years, and there is no particular exceptional distress in the district, and only in cases where no agricultural work can be done owing to the severe weather.

It has not been found necessary to maintain any unemployed register.

Runcorn Rural District (Chester).

Population (1891), 22,467. Rateable Value (1892–93), £167,049.

Letter from *J. Ashton*, Clerk, 7th March 1895.

With the exception of the following townships, there is no exceptional distress in the Rural District of Runcorn :—

Frodsham.

1. Exceptional distress owing to the severity of the weather.

2. Nothing has been done by public authorities, but during the week ended 16th February 90 persons were relieved from voluntary contributions.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make. The severe weather appears to be the sole cause.

Frodsham Lordship.

Frodsham Lordship.

1. Exceptional distress owing to the severity of the weather.

2. Nothing has been done by public authorities, but during the week ended 16th February 104 persons were relieved from voluntary contributions distributed by a committee appointed for the purpose.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

Halton.

1. Exceptional distress by reason of the partial closing of chemical works, men left in the district after the finishing of the Manchester Ship Canal, the severity of the weather, and farming depression.

2. Nothing has been done by public authorities, but during the week ended 16th February 33 persons were relieved from voluntary contributions distributed by a committee appointed for the purpose.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. If some relief could be given to the farmers, say relief from rates, &c., they would be able to employ more men.

Helsby.

1. Exceptional distress owing to the severity of the weather.

2. Nothing has been done by public authorities, but during the week ended 16th February about 15 families were relieved from voluntary contributions.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

Stretton.

1. Exceptional distress owing to the severity of the weather.

2. Nothing has been done by public authorities, but during the week ended 16th February nine families were relieved from voluntary contributions.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

Weston.

1. Exceptional distress owing to scarcity of work and the severity of the weather. The scarcity of work arises from the partial stoppage of the Western Chemical Works, 50 men only now being employed, as against 300 about three years ago; from the Weaver Navigation employing only one-quarter the number of men they did 12 months ago, and the stone quarries employing only one-half the number they did six months ago. Owing to the weather the stone quarries are stopped.

2. Nothing has been done by public authorities, but during the week ended 16th February about 350 dinners were provided from voluntary contributions.

3. No unemployed register.

4. No suggestions to make.

TOWCESTER RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 11,960. Rateable Value (1892–93), £76,736.

Letter from *W. Whitton*, Clerk, 7th March 1895.

1. THERE has been slightly more distress in the Towcester Union than is usual owing to the severe weather, but the Council are thankful to state that in most of the parishes the exceptional circumstances were dealt with outside the Board of Guardians, but there is no doubt whatever that there has been a considerable increase in the amount of relief which the Guardians have had to administer.

2. It is impossible to get any particulars from the voluntary agencies in the parishes as to the average daily number relieved by them during the week ended Saturday, the 16th February; take, for example, the town of Towcester. I am on the committee myself. We keep no record of the numerous people to whom soup is distributed. I might go farther, and say that the committee would not be disposed to reply to the inquiry.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. The suggestion which this Council would make is, that a great many people in this district have found some kind of employment for many who were out of work, and that example might be followed by many of the agitators who are continually interfering between the employers and the employed, and who never personally attempt to assist those out of work. Possibly, these gentlemen are afraid of losing their own employment.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

St. Martin in-the-Fields Parish.

Population (1891), 14,616. Rateable Value (1892–93), £521,515.

Letter from *G. W. Murnane*, Vestry Clerk, 8th March 1895.

1. The Vestry have no reason to believe that exceptional distress is prevalent in this parish.

2. A very considerble number of men have been recently employed in sweeping and removing snow, 600 days work having been paid for by the Vestry. In the week referred to, however, the occasion to remove snow did not arise. The Vestry have no official knowledge of the work performed by voluntary agencies.

3. An unemployed register is kept. The result has been for January and February last that employment has been found for 38 per cent. of the persons registering.

4. The Vestry have no suggestions to offer.

II.—COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Barrow-in-Furness County Borough.

Population (1891), 51,712. Rateable Value (1892–93), £230,753.

Letter from *C. F. Preston*, Town Clerk, 8th March 1893.

1. The committee of the Council believe that there is no exceptional distress within the borough at present, except amongst the *employés* of the iron and steel works; this distress is due to the depressed condition of the iron and steel trades. The present distress is not, however, so great as it was a few weeks since, or in the winter of 1893–94.

2. Nothing has been done to meet the distress by the public authorities, but certain assistance was given early in the year by distributing food, by voluntary agencies. The committee are informed that no persons were so relieved during the week ended Saturday, the 16th February, as the distress had then practically ceased.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The committee are of opinion that the distress has been met by the means which were adopted for its relief.

Dudley County Borough.

Population (1891), 45,740. Rateable Value (1892–93), £128,344.

Letter from *J. H. Claughton*, Mayor, 7th March 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in the district consequent upon the closing of numerous ironworks for which (*a*) high rate of wages; (*b*) high comparative railway rates; (*c*) and the absence of commercial treaties with protective foreign countries are largely responsible; (colliers wages are 30 per cent. above the 1889 standard).

2. Voluntary agencies met the distress in the week referred to.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make except the removal of the first cause of the distress, viz., the depressed condition of our foreign trade.

Gateshead County Borough.

Population (1891), 85,692. Rateable Value (1892–93), £272,687.

Letter from *W. Swinburne*, Town Clerk, 8th March 1895.

1. During the present winter there has been exceptional distress in Gateshead which, in the opinion of the Council is attributable to the general depression of trade on Tyneside to the closing for a period of some weeks of the extensive works of the United Alkali Company, Limited, who employ about 1,600 men and boys, and to the fact that a large number of men engaged in out-door work have been thrown out of employment by the protracted severe weather.

2. To meet the distress, means have been taken as follows: (*a*) By the Council, (1) employment of between 30 and 40 men in stoneyard to whom wages amounting to about 50*l.* have been paid; (2) employment of men in cleaning snow, &c., from streets, to whom, during the winter, wages have been paid amounting to 100*l.*, and for extra

extra cartage 50*l.*; (3) employment of men in keeping ice in condition at Park Lake, to whom about 100*l.* has been paid in wages. (*b*) By voluntary agencies, (1) Mayor's Relief Fund which has disbursed up to present about 500*l.*, and in addition given away about 30 tons of coal; 658 families were relieved from this fund during the week ended 16th February. These figures are not, however, a gauge of the actual distress as the committee have not been able for lack of funds, to extend help as far as they desired to do; (2) Guardians Benevolent Fund; (3) Gateshead School Board Children's Dinner Fund; (4) Poor Children's Sunday Morning Breakfast Fund; (5) Soup Kitchen, which has been supplying about 1,000 quarts of soup per day.

3. An unemployed register has not been maintained.

4. The Council have no suggestions to offer.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Newbury Municipal Borough (Berks).

Population (1891), 11,002. Rateable Value (1892–93), £38,202.

Letter from *F. Q. Louch*, for Town Clerk, 8th March 1895.

1. There has been exceptional distress in the district, mainly occasioned by the severe weather having caused the stoppage of the main drainage works, which were in full progress, together with other out-door work.

2. About 60 men are being employed by the Urban Sanitary Authority in digging gravel.

3. An unemployed register is not kept.

4. The Mayor is unable to offer any suggestions.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Handsworth Urban District (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 10,295. Assessable Value (1892–93), £23,257.

Letter from *N. Creswick*, Clerk, 7th March 1895.

1. The distress in this district is due to the severe weather as the men out of work are chiefly quarry men and gardeners.

2. The public authorities have not been able to find any suitable work, but a voluntary fund has been raised, and for the week ended 16th February, 95 families were relieved and for the week ended 23rd February, 157 families were relieved; 50*l.* has been distributed in addition to a large quantity of bread and soup.

3. The Chairman is not aware that an unemployed register is kept.

4. The Chairman has no suggestion to make as it is thought the distress will cease when the weather moderates.

Hinckley Urban District (Leicester).

Population (1891), 9,638. Assessable Value (1892-93), £17,903.

Letter from *G. Bott*, Chairman, 8th March 1895.

There is no exceptional distress in this district. There is distress, and this is chiefly with bricklayers, and labourers, and is mainly due to the severe weather.

The distress is being met by voluntary agencies by providing soup, &c., and the distribution of money. It would be difficult to obtain the daily number relieved as I believe no account has been kept.

There is no unemployed register maintained.

I have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving the distress, but I believe it is being satisfactorily met by voluntary agencies.

Malvern Link Urban District (Worcester).

Population (1891), 4,589. Assessable Value (1892–93), £19,504.

Letter from *G. H. T. Foster*, Clerk, 8th March 1895.

The Council have employed many of the men out of ordinary employment. There has been no scarcity of work in the district but owing to the severe weather the men have not been able to do the work. There have been established several private agencies for the relief of distress in the district.

NEWBURN URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 7,963. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *G. Wilkinson*, Clerk, 8th March 1895.

THE result of inquiries which the Chairman has made has satisfied him that there is no exceptional distress in the district.

NORTHALLERTON URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,802. Assessable Value (1892-93), £12,900.

Letter from *W. Fowle*, Clerk, 8th March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress caused by want of employment in this district.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

LONG CRENDON RURAL DISTRICT (BUCKINGHAM).

Population (1891), 4,760. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *W. Parker*, Clerk, 8th March 1895.

THE Council has reason to believe that there does exist in one parish in the district cases of exceptional distress arising, from scarcity of employment; but that as facilities for obtaining work will be increasing, the Council do not consider that any scheme which might be established for providing work for the unemployed need be undertaken at this advanced season of the year, but the Council have it in contemplation to mature a plan to meet future emergency.

THAME RURAL DISTRICT (OXFORD AND BUCKINGHAM).

Population (1891), 8,452. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *W. Parker*, Clerk, 8th March 1895.

THE Council have nothing to add to the reply already written by the Chairman on the subject, and which was sent to the Local Government Board on the 22nd ultimo.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

HACKNEY PARISH.

Population (1891), 198,606. Rateable Value (1892-93), £973,578.

Letter from *G. Grocott*, Vestry Clerk, 9th March 1895.

REFERRING to my letter of the 5th March, the average weekly wage of the men is 4*s.* 0½*d.* The average number dependent on each man is 2½ persons. One in 10 of the unemployed have children earning at the rate of 6*s.* 8*d.* per week; one in seven have wives earning at the rate of 3*s.* 5½*d.* per week, giving an average of about 1*s.* 2*d.* earned in addition to the man's wage. The average time out of employment is four months.

The Guardians should be authorised to relieve genuine cases of distress caused by temporary lack of employment, without imposing the labour test, without reference to the age of the applicant, and without requiring the ordinary proof of destitution, and without such relief dis-enfranchising the applicant. The providing of work for the unemployed has, in the opinion of the Vestry, passed from the range of local authorities, and must be dealt with by Government authority, but they would suggest that some considerable relief might be found in reducing the hours of work in all Government and Municipal Departments to eight hours per day, or 48 hours per week. Also that work for a large number of unskilled labourers can only be found upon the land, and the necessary capital should be found by the Government in the form of a loan to the local authority without interest, and terminating in, say, 10 years.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Llangefni Urban District (Anglesey).

Population (1891), 1,624. Assessable Value (1892–93), £3,347.

Letter from *T. Hughes*, Clerk, 9th March 1895.

During the last few weeks there was exceptional distress in the district, but owing entirely to the severe weather. Food and fuel were supplied daily by voluntary agencies, and the average daily number relieved was 70, or thereabouts.

The Council have no suggestions to make, as with the favourable change which has taken place in the weather the distress has considerably decreased.

Springhead Urban District (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 3,630. Assessable Value (1892–93), £9,638.

Letter from *W. B. Halliwell*, Clerk, 9th March 1895.

There has been no exceptional distress in the district.

Swinton and Pendlebury Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 21,637. Assessable Value (1892–93), £72,151.

Letter from *J. Berry*, Clerk, 9th March 1895.

The members of this Council are of the opinion that there is no exceptional distress within this district but what is mainly caused owing to the severe weather, and the Council have started the construction of a length of sewer with a view of finding employment for such as they can; and, relief has been given by the various religious denominations and benevolent persons to those actually in distress.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

Cheltenham Rural District (Gloucester).

Population (1891), ———. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *R. Ticehurst*, Clerk, 9th March 1895.

There has been no exceptional distress in this district.

Frome Rural District (Somerset).

Population (1891), 13,233. Rateable Value (1892-93), £93,450.

Letter from *G. W. Bradbury*, Clerk, 8th March 1895.

1. No exceptional distress exists, the severe weather caused a few hands to be out temporarily. In the colliery part of the district many hands are partially idle owing to depression in trade.

2. Nothing has been done by public authorities besides instructing the Surveyor to put on hands at stone breaking in special cases.

3. No unemployed register maintained.

4. No suggestion to make.

Sudbury Rural District (Derby).

Population (1891), 2,589. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *F. S. Hawthorn*, Clerk, 9th March 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in the district.

3. No unemployed register kept.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

St. Luke Parish.

Population (1891), 42,440. Rateable Value (1892–93), £325,649.

Letter from *G. W. Preston*, Vestry Clerk, 8th March 1895.

Adverting to the Chairman's reply of the 25th ultimo, I am directed by the Vestry to suggest that a further means of providing work for the unemployed of the nature referred to in the Circular would be the work of reclaiming the waste lands on the foreshore of the River Thames.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Horwich Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 12,850. Assessable Value (1892–93), £38,265.

Letter from *F. S. Foley*, Clerk, 9th March 1895.

1. There is exceptional distress in this district due to both causes.

2. The District Council of Horwich have found work by putting on extra men in cleaning streets, &c. Voluntary relief committees have been formed, and supplied 1,015 meals during the week ended 16th February.

3. No unemployed register has hitherto been kept, but it is proposed to start one.

Merthyr Tydfil Urban District (Glamorgan).

Population (1891), 58,080. Assessable Value (1892–93), £160,229.

Letter from *G. C. James*, Clerk, 5th March 1895.

So far as this district is concerned, the steel and iron works and collieries are in usual operation, and there has been, with the exception of the building trade, no exceptional want of employment in the district. The number of persons engaged in the building trade is not large. The Surveyor to my Council was instructed to endeavour to find work for persons out of employment, but, with the return of milder weather, the branches of work that had been temporarily suspended are in operation again.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Linthwaite Urban District (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 6,666. Assessable Value (1892–93), £20,039.

Letter from *J. C. Farrar*, Clerk, 12th March 1895.

At our last Council meeting it was considered that the break up of the severe frosty weather alone would remedy the distress, seeing that in this neighbourhood there is a large stone-quarrying industry, the want arising from the *employés* being unable to work, has been fairly relieved by the combined efforts of the sympathetic public to the extent as follows:—The Smithriding Working Men's Club have reported as follows: 1. There are practically no unemployed in the district. 2. The distress is to a large extent caused by the very severe weather. 3. The building trades, quarries and other out-door labour, have been practically at a standstill. 4. A committee was formed some time ago to relieve the distress in a sympathetic manner. 5. The funds, which have been quite ample, have been derived from private subscriptions and collections at the various mills, and have been dispensed in coal and food to those requiring assistance. 6. Soup kitchens have been open for five weeks and delivering food daily. 7. The number of families on the committee's books as being relieved is 50.

The

The Milnsbridge Aged and Poor Society report,—A large amount of distress has existed in the Milnsbridge district since the commencement of the year. This is largely attributed to the severity of the weather, frost and snow putting an end to all out-door employment, and we find the distress to have existed in a very acute form amongst those people who earn their living out of doors. The relief of this distress was promptly undertaken by the above society (an entirely voluntary agency) which, at the commencement, divided the neighbourhood into six districts and appointed two visitors to each. They made a thorough canvass and sought out every needy and deserving case. Such cases were relieved by parcels of provisions and coals. In this manner 13 tons of coals and provisions, amounting to 18*l.*, have been distributed amongst 40 families. There have been three distributions of soup and bread, at which an average number of 200 have participated. The money has been raised entirely by voluntary subscriptions. In addition to the above, Mr. Walker Dyson, J.P., has provided 700 meals gratis and also distributed a sum of money to each of the aged poor of the inhabitants of Milnsbridge.

The milder weather is already enabling a number of the out-door workers to resume their ordinary avocations, and it is thought that the distress is now virtually at an end, and that no works of an extraordinary character are requisite for the relief of those who have been out of employ.

West Derby Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 38,290. Assessable Value (1892–93), £164,618.

Letter from *Layton and Springman*, Clerks, 12th March 1895.

1. There has been, during the recent severe weather, exceptional distress among the labouring classes in the District of West Derby, due entirely to the prolonged frost, which suspended almost all out-door work.

2. There have been voluntary agencies at work to meet the distress, the average daily number relieved by each agency during the week which ended the 16th ultimo being as follows :—St. John's Church, Knotty Ash, Rev. F. J. Powell, Vicar, 120 ; County Police Station, Derby-lane, Old Swan (voluntary contributions), 800 ; Tue Brook Tabernacle, 65 ; Woodhall's Bakery, West Derby-road (voluntary private contributions), 450 ; St. Margaret's Church Mission Room, George's-road, 225. In addition, there have been the ordinary church and chapel poor relief funds ; and soup kitchens have been opened at private houses by individuals.

3. There has not been an unemployed register maintained.

4. The severe frost rendered most out-of-door occupations, such as road-making, spade agriculture, &c., impracticable. Relief might be furnished if a large quantity of breaking stone were stored in anticipation of hard weather, to be broken during such weather by men thrown out of employment ; but this would simply mean the loss of work at future periods of time.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

Hursley Rural District (Southampton).

Population (1891), 2,952. Rateable Value (1892–93), £23,668.

Letter from *H. White*, Clerk, 12th March 1895.

There has been no exceptional distress in this district. A certain amount of work has been found for the unemployed, and the Council have no particular suggestion to make.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Skelmersdale Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 6,627. Assessable Value (1892–93), £28,957.

Letter from *A. Dickinson*, Clerk, 13th March 1895.

There is no exceptional distress in the district.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

Altrincham Rural District (Chester).

Population (1891), ———. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. Toft*, Clerk, 12th March 1895.

It was generally expressed that no exceptional distress prevailed in this district, but whatever relief had been given had been done by voluntary agencies.

Chipping Campden Rural District (Gloucester).

Population (1891), 6,060. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. E. Hiron*, Clerk, 13th March 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in the district.

2. No action has been taken by public authorities, but in most places during the severe weather there was a voluntary distribution of coal and soup.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The matter should be left to voluntary assistance.

Whittlesey Rural District (Isle of Ely).

Population (1891), 2,789. Rateable Value (1892-93), £35,172.

Letter from *John Peed*, Clerk, 13th March 1895.

In the opinion of the Council there is no exceptional distress whatever existing in their district at the present time.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Ruskington Urban District (Parts of Kesteven).

Population (1891), 1,082. Assessable Value (1892-93), £2,341.

Letter from *J. Adlard*, Clerk, 13th March 1895.

1. There is no distress in this district.
2. Nothing is required.
3. No unemployed register kept.
4. No suggestions to make.

Uppermill Urban District (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 1,609. Assessable Value (1892-93) £3,554.

Letter from *E. Rowbotham*, Clerk, 14th March 1865.

1. There is no exceptional distress in the district at present. There has been distress, however, amongst the out-door workpeople, but it was due solely to the severity of the weather.

2. The distress was met by voluntary subscriptions, and some 300 or 400 relieved by means of soup-kitchens, and distribution of food three times a week.

3. No register of unemployed is maintained.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

ROMSEY RURAL DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON AND WILTS).

Population (1891), 6,505. Rateable Value (1892–93), £41,289.

Letter from *J. Allsop*, Clerk, 13th March 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress in the district more than the ordinary resources of the poor law administration have been able to deal with.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

LEWES MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (EAST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 10,997. Rateable Value (1892–93), £50,053.

Letter from *M. S. Blaker*, Town Clerk, 14th March 1895.

THE matter has been carefully considered by the Highways and Works Committee of the Town Council, who find there is no exceptional distress in this borough, beyond that caused by the severe weather.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

BRENTFORD URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 13,738. Assessable Value (1892–93), £64,744.

Letter from *S. Woodbridge*, Clerk, 14th March 1895.

ALTHOUGH there was exceptional distress in this district during the late severe weather, which was met by the collective efforts of the inhabitants in raising voluntary contributions, &c., the same has now practically ceased.

SPENNYMOOR URBAN DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), ———. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *F. Badcock*, Clerk, 14th March 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, due to the dulness of trade.

2. The coal-miners, who are unemployed, are relieved by the Durham Miners' Union, but for the rest of the unemployed there is no organised way for relief.

3. A register has recently been opened, and many of the unemployed have had their names registered, but no employers have made any enquiries.

4. No suggestion to make at present.

WEALDSTONE URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 3,626. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *G. Smither*, Chairman, 14th March 1895.

1. THERE has been a considerable amount of exceptional distress in this parish during the past few weeks, much more so than in previous years. This is chiefly due to the severe weather preventing many from following their ordinary employment. The distress has been greatest among (*a*) those ordinarily employed about the land, and (*b*) carters and others connected with the building trades.

2. (*a*) This Council, in order to alleviate the distress, have given employment, as far as possible, on their sewage farm, but inasmuch as the Council only came into existence last January, they have not been able to do anything in the way of relief works. (*b*) The Council communicated with the Hendon Board of Guardians, and suggested that relief works should be started at once, and also intimated their opinion as to the manner in which this could best be done. They, however, in reply, only received a letter of acknowledgment, and no further notice has been taken by the Guardians of the communication from the Council. (*c*) Consequent on the exceptional distress in the place, a voluntary relief fund was started on the 8th ultimo, and a committee formed, who have, until the past week, sat daily to administer relief. The average daily number relieved during the week ended the 16th February was 67.

3. Up to the present time there has not been an unemployed register kept in this parish, but the Council propose maintaining one in future.

4. The Council are of opinion that co-operation between Boards of Guardians and District Councils is most desirable; but having regard to the reception given by the Hendon Board of Guardians to this Council's communication previously referred to, it would appear that something more than a mere expression of opinion on the part of the Local Government Board is wanted. What is required is an absolute direction on the subject. Further, the Council are of opinion that, in times of exceptional distress, no loss of the privileges of citizenship should accrue to any man who is in the habit of earning his own living, but is compelled, through circumstances beyond his control, to apply to the Guardians for relief for himself and family.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

AYLESBURY RURAL DISTRICT (BUCKINGHAM).

Population (1891), 16,906. Rateable Value (1892–93), £115,240.

Letter from *F. B. Parrott*, Clerk, 15th March 1895.

IN some villages exceptional distress has existed, owing to the severe weather and the agricultural depression. This distress has, however, been relieved, as far as possible, by voluntary subscriptions.

LEIGH RURAL DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 7,735. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *E. Williams*, Clerk, 15th March 1895.

NO exceptional distress prevails in this district. The four townships in the district are entirely rural in character, and the inhabitants are of such a description that a very few even require the assistance of the Guardians.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

CROMPTON URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 12,901. Assessable Value (1892–93), £45,985.

Letter from *J. H. Mills*, Clerk, 16th March 1895.

THE amount of distress in this district during the recent severe weather was not so great as to warrant the Council making any special provisions for the employment of the unemployed.

RIPLEY URBAN DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 8,774. Assessable Value (1892-93), £——.

Letter from *G. M. Capon*, Clerk, 16th March 1895.

No special distress prevails in this district.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

KIVETON PARK RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 6,761. Rateable Value (1892-93), £——.

Letter from *J. S. Whall*, Clerk, 15th March 1895.

IN the Chairman's opinion, there has been no exceptional distress due to the severe weather, and the only distress has been amongst the miners in the parish of Wales, who were working the Park Gate Seam at the Kiveton Colliery. This seam has been closed, and the men consequently thrown out of employment. Help has come to them from the Yorkshire Miners' Association. The men working in other parts of the Kiveton Colliery have been working good time.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

JARROW MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 33,675. Rateable Value (1892-93), £100,567.

Letter from *W. S. Daglish*, Town Clerk, 19th March 1895.

1. THERE has been a great amount of distress in the borough, but this has been mainly caused by the severe weather.

2. The Town Council are obtaining a quantity of slag to be broken by men out of work. There have been two or three different agencies for the relief of children of the unemployed, but none for the adults, except what is now being done by the Town Council. There was no agency in existence on the 16th February, and consequently I cannot give the figures required.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

ARLECDON AND FRIZINGTON URBAN DISTRICT (CUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 5,697. Assessable Value (1892-93), £——.

Letter from *J. Bowly*, Clerk, 19th March 1895.

THIS Council employed a number of persons during the very severe weather in removing snow, &c., and since the frost has disappeared most of the unemployed who follow agricultural pursuits have found work. There are still a number of iron ore miners out of employment; but one of the mines, which has been closed for some time, will start work on Monday next.

The Council have decided to improve one of the roads in the district with the view of finding work for those who may still be out of employment, and they trust that very shortly they will be able to report that there is no exceptional distress in the district.

CRICCIETH URBAN DISTRICT (CARNARVON).

Population (1891), 1,410. Assessable Value (1892–93), £3,693.

Letter from *T. Jones*, Clerk, 19th March 1895.

1. THE distress in this district was, almost without exception, due to the severe weather, the unemployed being masons, builders' labourers, and agricultural labourers, who on account of the unusually hard frost were unable to follow their ordinary avocations.

2. The District Council having no works of improvement in course of progress gave employment to men to break stones for macadam, work in which all unskilled labourers might share. As to voluntary agencies, collections were made in the churches and chapels, and subscriptions collected. Out of the fund so formed tickets were given in deserving cases for provisions. These could be taken to any shop in the district, and provisions to the amount of the ticket were given in exchange. During the week ended 23rd February 85 cases, representing relief to the amount of 11*l.* 8*s.*, were helped out of the fund referred to. I am unable to state in how many cases help was given during the week to the 16th February, the ticket system not having then been adopted. About 30*l.* was so distributed out of the public fund during the period of distress, and it is estimated that an equal amount was expended on charity out of private sources.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

. The Chairman of the District Council suggests that there should be an expeditious way of enabling local bodies to obtain loans to proceed with works of public improvement in emergencies such as the recent unusually severe weather.

HARRINGTON URBAN DISTRICT (CUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 3,535. Assessable Value (1892-93), £13,584.

Letter from *J. Bowly*, Clerk, 19th March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district at the present time.

WELLINGTON URBAN DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 5,909. Assessable Value (1892–93), £21,825.

Letter from *G. Hollies*, Chairman, 18th March 1895.

1. THERE was exceptional distress principally among the labourers employed in building trades, and due to the severe weather.

2. Voluntary agencies, such as coal and soup charities, free dinner charities, &c., dealt with the distress. Over 4,000 hot dinners free to the destitute poor were distributed, at a cost of 70*l.* Twenty-five distributions of soup, about 90 gallons each distribution, making a total of over 2,000 gallons. Over 1,600 loaves of bread have been distributed since Christmas last, at a cost of 65*l.* I am unable to give the daily number relieved.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. The distress is now relieved, the severe weather having abated.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

INCE-IN-MAKERFIELD URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 19,255. Assessable Value (1892–93), £57,727.

Letter from *B. Howgate*, Clerk, 21st March 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district at present due to depression in the iron trade ; but, in the main, the ironworkers affected are immigrants from other districts.

2. The Urban District Council is doing what it can to alleviate the distress by finding employment for the unemployed ; but the recent severe weather has been a bar to much being done in this respect.

There are also voluntary relief agencies dealing with the distress before-named, these having been well supported. From figures supplied by the secretary of the said agencies, the average daily number of persons relieved in the week ended 16th February 1895 would be 66.

3. No unemployed register is maintained in the district, and the provision of one would hardly be applicable to it. Altogether, about 650 persons are affected.

4. The early sanction to loans for the purpose of re-paving the principal main road in the district, as well as for private street improvements, both of which are in contemplation, are suggested as a means of enabling the Urban District Council to find employment for a good number of men.

THAME URBAN DISTRICT (OXFORD).

Population (1891), 3,334. Assessable Value (1892–93), £9,087.

Letter from *W. Parker*, Clerk, 21st March 1895.

THE Council approve of the answer given by the Chairman in his communication to the Local Government Board of the 20th ultimo, and at present the Council have nothing further to add.

TURTON URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 6,354. Assessable Value (1892–93), £21,238.

Letter from *J. B. Goulburn*, Clerk, 20th March 1895.

THERE has not been any exceptional distress in the district during the winter now ending, nor any poverty of an unusual kind necessitating extraordinary measures for its relief.

The Council direct me further to say that they do not keep an unemployed register, as owing to the labouring classes being kept in fairly good employment all the year round there is no need for one, and to add that as the Council have not yet had any experience of dealing with exceptional distress they are unable to offer any suggestion for meeting such an emergency.

III. BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

BRIDPORT MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DORSET).

Population (1891), 6,611. Rateable Value (1892–93), £23,365.

Letter from *F. W. Gundry*, Town Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress from want of employment in this borough.

BUCKINGHAM MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (BUCKINGHAM).

Population (1891), 3,364. Rateable Value (1892-93), £17,123.

Letter from *H. Thorpe*, Mayor, 22nd March 1895.

WE have no distress in this town, through workmen being out of employment.

CARMARTHEN MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CARMARTHEN).

Population (1891), 10,264. Rateable Value (1892–93), £37,956.

Letter from *R. M. Thomas*, Town Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THE distress in Carmarthen this winter has been exceptional, and may be attributed chiefly to the long frost, but partly also to the state of affairs in the tin-plate trade, the tin-works having been wholly or partly stopped for a considerable part of the winter.

2. Nothing was done by the public authorities, the state of the weather during the period of acute distress not allowing of works being undertaken which might have given employment to men out of work. A good deal was done by private persons and agencies in the way of supplying food and firing to the poor. In the week ended 16th February about 700 jugs of soup and as many loaves of bread were given away at a soup kitchen supported by voluntary subscriptions. Breakfasts were given to the children at the National Schools, and free meals were provided on three days of the week to about 400 children by a voluntary organisation. After that week about 50*l.* worth of flour, coals, and other necessaries was distributed among those who were considered most in need. Besides these charities, which were of a more or less public kind, there was a great deal done in a more private way. It may be mentioned that the population of the town district of Carmarthen, to which alone these charities extended, is not more than 8,000.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. Most of the poverty here is chronic, and may be considered irremediable. This is not to any great extent a manufacturing town, and it is not a large enough place to allow of works being undertaken for the purpose of providing employment to labourers on a scale large enough to make much difference. Of course, the frost which caused most of the exceptional distress itself prevented such works being put in hand. In any time of exceptional distress there is always here plenty of help forthcoming. The chief difficulty is in getting at the deserving cases, and the experience of the past winter seems to point to the conclusion that the larger the scale on which any charitable scheme is undertaken the greater the proportion of waste. I have no doubt that the publicity and demonstration which have attended the efforts of charity here in the past winter will have a very bad effect in the future in leading the poor to consider a state of unemployedness in the winter as not wholly undesirable. In a small town such as this all cases of urgent need are pretty sure to be reached by private charity, and, from any point of view, the less display made about works of relief the better.

DARLINGTON MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 38,060. Rateable Value (1892–93), £157,917.

Letter from *F. T. Steavenson*, Town Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THE distress in this borough is only caused by the closing of the steelworks.
2. The distress has been met by the Mayor's Distress Fund, soup kitchens, &c.
3. No unemployed register kept.
4. No suggestions to make. If the works were re-started the distress would disappear.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 12,333. Rateable Value (1892–93), £73,888.

Letter from *J. R. Brightwell*, Mayor, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE has recently been exceptional distress in this borough owing to the severe weather, in consequence of which a great many were thrown out of employment. A large number of bricklayers and labourers are engaged here, as building operations to some extent are in progress; the distress was solely on account of the severe weather.

2. The Town Council employed as many as possible to assist in clearing away snow from the streets and thoroughfares. A Relief Fund was organised by the inhabitants, a sum of 292*l.* having been contributed and expended in affording relief. The distress has now abated; the fund has been closed; and further applications for relief are discouraged, as it has been found that certain persons refused to work so long as they could obtain relief from the fund.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained here.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

AMPTHILL URBAN DISTRICT (BEDFORD).

Population (1891), 2,294. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Wright*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. IN the opinion of this Council there is no exceptional distress in this Urban District calling for treatment.
2. No exceptional measures have been taken.
3. There is no unemployed register.
4. No suggestions to make.

ARDSLEY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 4,494. Assessable Value (1892–93), £16,331.

Letter from *E. W. Thirkell*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

THE Council requested every Committee to act upon the recommendations made in your Circular of the 19th ultimo, in respect of any work that was being done, or likely to be done, as far as possible.

BRIGG URBAN DISTRICT (PARTS OF LINDSEY).

Population (1891), 3,100. Assessable Value (1892–93), £7,645.

Letter from *G. S. Sowter*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THE distress in Brigg was not so serious as to prevent it being dealt with by the ordinary means.

Work was given to such of the unemployed as cared to take it in breaking stone belonging to the Council, but this was not popular.

Such distress as there was owing to the frost was dealt with by private charity, and has now happily passed away.

BROMYARD URBAN DISTRICT (HEREFORD).

Population (1891), ——. Assessable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *J. Jenks*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

THERE has not been, so far as I am aware, any special distress arising from want of employment in this town and neighbourhood. I think there has been the usual employment for men willing to work, with the exception of three or four weeks, in the late severe frost, when liberal relief was given in food and coals to all that were in need and to many who were not in need; nor were the Poor Law Guardians, as I understand, unusually pressed by needy applicants.

BUCKHURST HILL URBAN DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), ——. Assessable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *T. J. Tee*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE has been very little exceptional distress in this district. Such as there was has been sufficiently dealt with by private charity and the Poor Law.

BULKINGTON URBAN DISTRICT (WARWICK).

Population (1891), 1,389. Assessable Value (1892–93), £6,061.

Letter from *J. Estlin*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE has been slight exceptional distress, due to the late severe weather only.
2. The distress has been dealt with by private charity.
3. No unemployed register kept.
4. Now that the severe weather has gone, out-door employment has been resumed.

The Relieving Officer states that the labouring classes do not like to pauperise themselves.

FARNHAM URBAN DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 5,545. Assessable Value (1892–93), £20,525.

Letter from *R. Mason*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THE only distress in this district from want of employment was occasioned by the recent frost, and now that the frost has gone the distress has abated. The Council were unable to undertake any works for the relief of the distress.

HAYWARDS HEATH URBAN DISTRICT (EAST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 2,452. Assessable Value (1892–93), £12,218.

Letter from *E. Waugh*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE is no want of employment within this district, there being a great deal of building operations now being carried on; but during the recent severe weather a large number were temporarily thrown out of employment.

To assist the temporary distress a fund was raised by voluntary agencies, and food and fuel were freely distributed to all cases. There were about 150 cases relieved during the week ended 16th February from this temporary fund; of course, that did not interfere with private charity. No register of unemployed was kept beyond a list of recipients of relief.

KINGSBRIDGE DISTRICT URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 2,888. Assessable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *J. S. Hurrell*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

THERE was only a small amount of distress from want of employment while the frost lasted. The frost, however, here was not nearly so severe as farther North, the roads having been all through free of snow and ice. I relieved all the deserving cases out of my own pocket.

KINGTON URBAN DISTRICT (HEREFORD).

Population (1891), 2,086. Assessable Value (1892–93), £8,508.

Letter from *A. Temple*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

THERE is not in this district any exceptional distress for which it is necessary to provide any public works.

LITTLE CROSBY URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 641. Assessable Value (1892–93), £2,551.

Letter from *M. O'Connor*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE has not been, and is not, any perceptible distress in the district of the Council from the above cause. The population, which is small, belongs almost exclusively to the farming and farm labourers' class.

MILTON-NEXT-SITTINGBOURNE URBAN DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 5,213. Assessable Value (1892–93), £14,175.

Letter from *W. Parham*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE was much distress in the parish in February, due mainly to the severity of the weather.

2. Such distress was greatly alleviated by measures promptly taken by local voluntary agencies; food and fuel were largely distributed. The children attending the several schools were daily fed; hundreds (including adults) were supplied with nourishment. As soon as the frost would admit of it, work of sewerage and street works were commenced, affording employment to numbers out of work.

3. So far as I am aware, there was no register of the unemployed kept.

The Council meet on Tuesday, when I will place the correspondence before them.

PADIHAM AND HAPTON URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 11,301. Assessable Value (1892–93), £35,600.

Letter from *J. R. Smith*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE is no distress in this district calling for any departure from the ordinary means of relief.

SALCOMBE URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 1,593. Assessable Value (1892–93), £3,378.

Letter from *J. Fairweather*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE has been no such distress in this district during the past winter. There has been an abundance of work for all classes in consequence of the waterworks that are being carried out by the Council, and also by extensive building operations that are going on in the district.

Work was only impeded for a very short time in consequence of the severity of the weather, and whatever temporary distress was occasioned by it was met by private charity.

There is an unusual demand for labour at the present time, and there are no unemployed in our district.

SANDGATE URBAN DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 1,756. Assessable Value (1892–93), £10,452.

Letter from *L. J. D. Brockman*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress within the district of the Sandgate District Council. There are no manufactories or industries in the town, and very few really poor people, the majority of the labouring class being in the almost constant employ of the tradesmen and builders of the place.

SCUNTHORPE URBAN DISTRICT (PARTS OF LINDSEY).

Population (1891), 3,481. Assessable Value (1892-93), £15,461.

Letter from *J. Fletcher*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.
2. No relief given.
3. Unemployed register not kept.
4. Work has been fairly regular throughout the winter in the iron and steel industries.

SHEPTON MALLET URBAN DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 5,500. Assessable Value (1892-93), £14,764.

Letter from *A. E. Nalder*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

IN this district a relief committee was called together by the Chairman, and resulted in some 40*l.* being distributed by way of tickets by visitors who personally investigated the cases relieved. Groceries and coal were usually given.

Free breakfasts were also given by two residents while the frost continued; and during the week ended 16th February, 560 breakfasts were thus given.

The measures so taken with the relief given by the parish authorities was ample to meet the exigency.

SHERBORNE URBAN DISTRICT (DORSET).

Population (1891), 5,001. Assessable Value (1892-93), £15,987.

Letter from *E. A. Ffooks*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THE Council are not aware of any exceptional distress in the district other than a certain number of people having been out of work owing to the severe weather. They have no special means of ascertaining whether there is any exceptional distress such as would be in the cognisance of the Board of Guardians.

2. No special works, such as road-making, &c., were undertaken. Nothing could be done to the ground while frost-bound. A local subscription was raised and a large quantity of coal supplied at a reduced rate.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

SITTINGBOURNE URBAN DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 8,302. Assessable Value (1892-93), £24,912.

Letter from *W. J. Harris*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

DURING the recent prolonged frost there was distress, by reason of the work in the brickfields, &c., being brought to a standstill. This was met by voluntary help, a sum of over 300*l.* having been subscribed and disbursed in soup, bread, and coals. Not one able-bodied person has applied for Poor Law Relief in consequence of want of employment. Now that the frost has gone, work has been resumed, and there is no necessity to resort to the provision of work as suggested in the circular letter of the 19th ultimo.

STONE URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 5,754. Assessable Value (1892-93), £15,905.

Letter from *J. Harding*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this town.

2. What little distress there is, has been owing to the severe weather and consequent stoppage of out-door labour, and this has been relieved by a small public subscription.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. I have no suggestions to make.

WHITSTABLE URBAN DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891),———. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from A. *Tilley*, 22nd March 1895.

THE distress in our town has been very much above the average, in consequence of the oyster scare (this trade being one of our principal industries), and the long-continued frost. I calculate the unemployed to have numbered about 600, representing over 2,000 persons, out of a population of 6,200. Of these from one-half to two-thirds have been relieved.

A committee was formed, who have given away soup, bread, grocery, and coal to the value of about 200*l.*

The Nonconformists and private individuals have given away about 12,000 free breakfasts, dinners and teas. About 20*l.* has been disbursed by tickets on tradesmen according to the needs of the different families. Besides this a large amount of private charity has been disbursed.

The Urban Council being a newly-formed body, could not see their way clear (having no funds) to employ more than a few hands in clearing the roads of snow, scraping the streets, &c. No other public body has done anything to give employment.

Since the change in the weather most of the acute want has disappeared, although there are many men whose earnings are only averaging from 5*s.* to 10*s.* per week.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

AMPTHILL RURAL DISTRICT (BEDFORD & HERTFORD).

Population (1891), 12,702. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *John Wright*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

No exceptional distress in this district.
No unemployed register kept.
No suggestions to make.

AUCKLAND RURAL DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), ———. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *R. Peverell*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE is some exceptional distress in this district, owing to the stoppage of certain collieries, and the short time others are working.

2. The distress is met by the Durham Miners' Union, which pays 10*s.* weekly to each member of the Union, about 1,000 being relieved in this way weekly.

3. No unemployed register is maintained by the local authorities.

4. No observations.

BAKEWELL RURAL DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 18,477. Rateable Value (1892-93), £112,446.

Letter from *G. Leigh*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. EXCEPTIONAL distress existed, more or less, in 11 out of 55 parishes, entirely caused by the severe weather.

2. Voluntary agencies have distributed relief in the shape of food, coals, &c. Average daily number not ascertainable. No organised method in most places.

3. In no case is an unemployed register kept, nor is it considered necessary in such a sparsely-populated district.

4. No suggestion to make. The change of weather has removed the distress.

BROMSGROVE RURAL DISTRICT (WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 11,834. Rateable Value (1892-93), £92,283.

Letter from *James Wright*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

THE only exceptional distress in this Union was at the time of the severe and continued frost, which was liberally dealt with by private subscriptions whereby local organisations met the cases adequately.

CHIPPING NORTON RURAL DISTRICT (OXFORD).

Population (1891), 12,664. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *A. C. Rawlinson*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE has not been any exceptional distress in the district. Any slight distress caused by the severe weather has been relieved by voluntary agencies.

COCKERMOUTH RURAL DISTRICT (CUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 26,340. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *T. Paisley*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

THERE has been some exceptional distress in this Union due to the severe weather, but not to any great extent. Only two able-bodied persons have been provided with work by the Guardians under the labour test order. Soup kitchens were established in different towns in the Union, but these have now been discontinued.

An unemployed register has not been maintained.

COVENTRY RURAL DISTRICT (WARWICK).

Population (1891), 280. Rateable Value (1892-93), £6,384.

Letter from *J. Arch*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE is not any exceptional distress in the area of the Coventry Rural District Council, and therefore it is not necessary for anything to be done to meet it. There is no register of the unemployed maintained, and the Council have no suggestions to make.

HALTWHISTLE RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 7,746. Rateable Value (1892-93), £71,194.

Letter from *J. Maxwell*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE has not been any distress whatever in this district, caused by want of employment, during the past winter season.

KINGTON RURAL DISTRICT (HEREFORD).

Population (1891), 6,064. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *A. Temple*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE is not in this district any exceptional distress for which it is necessary to provide any public works.

MUTFORD AND LOTHINGLAND RURAL DISTRICT (EAST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 11,676. Rateable Value (1892-93), £54,238.

Letter from *C. Steward*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

THE Mutford and Lothingland Board have had no exceptional distress to deal with.

PATELEY BRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 7,761. Rateable Value (1892-93), £.52,289.

Letter from *A. M. Bateson*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE was a little distress in the district, and the little that prevailed was dealt with by private families. There was no unemployed register kept.

PRESTON RURAL DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 17,199. Rateable Value (1892–93), £148,199.

Letter from *J. Clarke*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE does not exist any distress in the Council's district calling for action on the part of the Council; no agencies are required; no unemployed register is maintained; and the Council have no suggestions to make on the subject.

ROCK RURAL DISTRICT (WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 2,252. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *A. P. Trow*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THE District Council have not adopted any means of affording assistance to the unemployed; no grounds for doing so having yet arisen.

ST. IVES RURAL DISTRICT (HUNTINGDON).

Population (1891), 9,986. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *G. D. Day*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THE Circular of the Local Government Board of the 19th ultimo was read to this Council at the following meeting after its receipt, but as it appeared that there was no exceptional distress in this district arising from want of employment, no action was taken thereon.

ST. NEOT'S UNION { ST. NEOT'S / EATON SOCON } RURAL DISTRICTS (HUNTINGDON AND BEDFORD).

Population (1891) { St. Neots, 8,181. / Eaton Socon, 3,708. } Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. A. Ennals*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE has been no distress from want of employment in this Union.

SEISDON RURAL DISTRICT (STAFFORD AND SALOP).

Population (1891), 12,325. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *W. Farnworth*, Vice-Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress in this district so far as I have been able to learn, though there has been plenty around us.

SHEPTON MALLET RURAL DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 10,059. Rateable Value (1892–93), £89,864.

Letter from *A. E. Nalder*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

No special distress has been felt in this district, and there was no need for opening of labour yards. The distress in Shepton Mallet is dealt with by the Urban District Council letter herewith.

The few cases which arose were relieved by the Relieving Officers, in kind, after strict investigation.

SPALDING RURAL DISTRICT (PARTS OF HOLLAND AND KESTEVEN).

Population (1891), 12,719. Rateable Value (1892–93), £121,147.

Letter from *H. S. Maples*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

DURING the winter months the distress in this locality was not very prevalent for want of work, a voluntary relief committee in Spalding applied the labour test with the result that only 13 offered themselves for work at spade labour, and there is no doubt the allotments in the neighbourhood were of great assistance as there was a good supply of corn, potatoes, and bacon, in a large number of homes.

STOW-ON-THE-WOLD RURAL DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER AND WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 7,479. Rateable Value (1892-93), £53,501.

Letter from *R. G. Francis*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

IN this district there was a want of employment amongst agricultural labourers owing to the severe and continued frost which prevented farm labour.

In this, a purely agricultural neighbourhood, there is no other kind of employment to be substituted, and it was impossible therefore to provide employment for those whose want of it arose from the impossibility of doing such work under the circumstances. The Council could not therefore act on the suggestions contained in the Circular.* The very circumstances that created the want prevented the suggested mode of meeting it.

The distress was largely met by private subscriptions. Soup kitchens were started, and bread and fish were distributed in this town, for instance.

SWAVESEY RURAL DISTRICT (CAMBRIDGE).

Population (1891), 2,934. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *G. D. Day*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THE Circular of the Local Government Board of the 19th ultimo was read to this Council at the following meeting after its receipt, but as it appeared that there was no exceptional distress in this district arising from want of employment, no action was taken thereon.

TEWKESBURY RURAL DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER AND WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 7,627. Rateable Value (1892-93), £73,119.

Letter from *H. A. Badham*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

I REFER you to the reply I have given, as Town Clerk, on the 25th February, and which applied to the whole district. No special directions or steps have been taken by this Council.

WOKINGHAM RURAL DISTRICT (BERKS).

Population (1891), 14,639. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. F. Sargeant*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress in the Rural District of Wokingham, and consequently there has been no necessity to take the steps referred to in Queries 2 and 3 contained in your letter.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

FULHAM PARISH.

Population (1891), 91,639. Rateable Value (1892-93), £471,074.

Letter from *W. J. H. Denselow*, Vestry Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

1. FROM observation and reports from Relieving Officers the distress has not been exceptional in Fulham during the past winter. There has been want of employment in various out-door trades, and amongst unskilled labourers during the frost.

2. The Vestry, on the 27th February last, voted a sum of 300*l.* to be spent in wages for casual labourers, the work to be, if possible, of a profitable nature, and the rates of pay to be the current rates as paid to the staff of the regular workmen employed by the Vestry. This money has been expended in repairing carriageways and footways, channelling old roads and scavenging roads, but none of these works, except the last-named, could have been carried out during the hard frost. The men were paid daily, and a new set of men engaged daily, with the object of distributing the funds to the best advantage. An average of 70 men were employed daily.

3. A register is kept at the Town Hall, and all the men employed were engaged in turn from this. The register is useful it work can be found for casual labour.

4. The conference held a short time ago between the Hammersmith Vestry, Fulham Vestry, and Fulham Board of Guardians, was unable to arrive at any satisfactory suggestions for the relief of distress during severe weather.

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* See note * on page 87.

Greenwich District Board of Works.

Population (1891), 165,413. Rateable Value (1892–93), £838,646.

Letter from *F. G. Landon*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

Except with regard to the extreme duration of the frost, I do not think there were any abnormal features in the distress this year. The Greenwich District Board of Works took into consideration the Circular* issued by the Local Government Board, and decided that the greater part of it contained recommendations that were absolutely useless with regard to London districts. Only two clauses could be dealt with by us, and we passed resolutions: (1) Calling upon our officers to hasten forward as far as possible the making of such roads in the district as we had authority to form and pave as new streets. (2) Empowering our Surveyor to mend such roads, not usually dealt with by the Board, as were in special need of repair. We also empowered our Surveyor to employ as many men as could be usefully engaged in work on the ordinary roads. In compliance with the last direction men were largely employed during the frost, as a maximum nearly 1,000 men being engaged. We found that such employment of men was liable to great abuse: (1) It was difficult to secure efficient supervision of so many extra men, and many of the men shirked the work greatly; (2) The most clamorous and not the most needy and deserving secured employment; (3) We had proof that men, who usually worked for local employers at 3*s.* 6*d.* per day, obtained work from us as unemployed at 3*s.* 4*d.* per day, because they could practically have a holiday and secure nearly as much pay. If we had paid 4*s.* 6*d.* per day, as many demanded, I am convinced this evil would have been much more rampant. There is a chronic class of men in our district, and no doubt throughout London, who suffer from want of employment, and who are deserving of aid, and it is the great problem how to help such men. They seem to consist—(1) Of men who through some physical defect are not of full efficiency, and who naturally fall behind in competition with more effective men; (2) Old Army and Navy men who have families, and not having any trade that they are effective at, cannot secure sufficient work to keep their families; (3) Men who through sickness or other temporary cause have lost employment, and find it difficult amidst competition to win their way back to the ranks of the fully employed. There is, however, a class, as large or perhaps larger, who are mere loafers, who will do no more work than is necessary to keep them going, and spend their ingenuity in dodges to secure a living without work. These are the men who are most likely to secure the pay when extra men are employed by local bodies, and who trust to secure the pay for as little work as possible. Such men have no feelings of independence. They do not hesitate to go into the workhouse when it suits them, though they prefer liberty outside, provided it can be secured with very little work. When to the loafers we add the drunkards, we have an army of ne'er-do-wells, that no efforts seem able to cure or satisfactorily help. The only hope is to destroy these classes by properly training their children to habits of industry and independence.

II.—COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Exeter County Borough.

Population (1891), 37,404. Rateable Value (1892–93), £205,035.

Letter from *G. R. Shorto*, Town Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

During the prevalence of the late severe frost there was a certain amount of distress in the district, but which could hardly be called exceptional. During the extreme frost, which lasted about a month, a much larger quantity of food than usual at the season was distributed through the soup kitchen and similar agencies, the cost being borne by public subscription.

The City Surveyor was authorised to employ as many men as he usefully could in extra street cleansing and levelling the ground intended to be used as an addition to a public recreation ground, and in this way he gave employment for from 50 to 60 men. This was successful in relieving the slight pressure that existed, and which with the breaking-up of the frost disappeared.

A register of labourers and mechanics desiring employment was started in the autumn of 1893, and notice was given by handbill extensively posted inviting skilled artizans or labourers who were out of employment to place their names in the register. The register was kept open for the entire winter, and only 166 labourers and 30 artizans registered their names, and throughout the whole of last winter not a single name was registered.

Lincoln County Borough.

Population (1891), 41,491. Rateable Value (1892–93), £146,824.

Letter from *A. W. Hall*, Mayor, 23rd March 1895.

1. In the different foundries and manufactories in the city there has been the usual amount of employment, and though during the severe frost which prevailed in January and February bricklayers and bricklayers' labourers were for a considerable time out of employment, it cannot be said that any exceptional distress prevailed in Lincoln.

2. During the continuance of the severe weather the Corporation employed an extra number of men on works of street-sweeping, breaking stones, &c. The extra number employed would be about 130 (that is, half that number one week and the remaining half the next week). The local Charity Organisation Society dealt with many cases and all needs were attended to until the frost broke up, when no further necessity remained.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. The above measures seem to have been sufficient to have met the requirements of Lincoln, and no further suggestions are offered.

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* See note * on page 87.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Aberavon Municipal Borough (Glamorgan).

Population (1891), 6,300. Rateable Value (1892–93), £14,375.

Letter from *M. Tennant*, Town Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

During the recent severe weather relief has been administered, and it is hoped the crisis in the tinplate trade has now passed. Extensive works are now going on at the docks, when it is hoped some will find employment, while others will find employment on the farms and gardens.

Barnstaple Municipal Borough (Devon).

Population (1891), 13,058. Rateable Value (1892–93), £44,801.

Letter from *S. Berry*, Mayor, 23rd March 1895.

A lot of distress existed in the town during the severe weather, from want of employment; this was dealt with by local philanthropy, in which I took an active part. I do not think there is any special distress at present existing.

Eye Municipal Borough (East Suffolk).

Population (1891), 2,064. Rateable Value (1892–93), £8,952.

Letter from *H. Geding*, Mayor, 23rd March 1895.

Now the sharp winter has gone, we have no spare men here, but will want some on the land in a month's time; but it is a hard job to get good men.

Helston Municipal Borough (Cornwall).

Population (1891), 3,198. Rateable Value (1892–93), £9,173.

Letter from *J. Walker Tyacke*, Town Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

1. While the frost lasted there was distress in this district, chiefly amongst those employed in the building trade.

2. A fund was raised by public subscription, and in the week ended 16th February relief in the shape of provisions and coals was supplied to the amount of £75, to upward of 300 individuals (out of a population of about 1,200). Besides this, as many men as practicable were employed in removing snow from the streets. The frost here was neither so severe nor so prolonged as in other parts of England; and by the time your Circular of the 19th ultimo was received the frost had broken up and the distress was at an end; and on this accountit was thought that no reply was needed to your Circular.

Lampeter Municipal Borough (Cardigan).

Population (1891), 1,569. Rateable Value (1892–93), £3,779.

Letter from *D. Lloyd*, Town Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

1. There has been no exceptional distress in this borough, except a little during the recent frost.

2. No special arrangement to meet distress has been made.

3. No unemployed register maintained.

4. The Town Council have no suggestion to make.

Llandovery Municipal Borough (Carmarthen).

Population (1891), 1,728. Rateable Value (1892–93), £6,280.

Letter from *J. Thomas*, Town Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

There is no exceptional distress in this borough, and therefore no steps are taken here to meet it.

Louth Municipal Borough (Parts of Lindsey).

Population (1891), 10,040. Rateable Value (1892 93) £44,903.

Letter from *T. F. Allison*, Town Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

There is no distress from want of employment in this borough.

MONMOUTH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 5,470. Rateable Value (1892-93), £24,329.

Letter from *W. Honeyfield*, Mayor, 23rd March 1895.

WE are perhaps better off than many places in respect of distress from want of employment, and we have no acute cases. We shall be in a favourable position when you grant us the loan for our drainage and lighting work, which will put us over the next winter.

OSWESTRY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SALOP).

Population (1891), 8,496. Rateable Value (1892–93), £30,732.

Letter from *J. Parry Jones*, Town Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THE Town Council of this borough have made application to your Board for sanction to borrow 2,100*l.* for the purpose of relaying water mains, and immediately the sanction is obtained the work will be commenced.

PENRYN MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 3,256. Rateable Value (1892–93), £7,100.

Letter from *G. Jenkins*, Town Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE is always more or less distress in the borough during the winter season, and through the past winter this distress has somewhat increased by reason of the severe weather, and the inability of many of the labouring class to obtain employment in consequence.

2. The Town Council were not called upon to meet such exceptional distress, as sufficient funds were raised by a private committee from voluntary contributions to relieve all deserving cases. The number of persons relieved was about 100 per week.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. There are at the present time, so far as I am aware, no exceptional cases of distress in the borough.

QUEENBOROUGH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (KENT).

Population (1891), 1,050. Rateable Value (1892–93), £6,627.

Letter from *W. J. Harris*, Town Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THERE has been no appreciable distress in this small borough from want of employment this winter.

ROTHERHAM MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 42,061. Rateable Value (1892–93), £142,771.

Letter from *H. H. Hickmott*, Town Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. DURING the severe weather there was exceptional distress in this borough. The men employed at the ironworks cannot obtain full employment, and distress is caused thereby. There are a number of large ironworks in this district.

2. During the severe weather a public subscription was opened ; upwards of 300*l.* was subscribed and expended. During the week you mention it is believed upwards of 2,000 people were relieved. There is no special agency to meet the distress now. The Corporation propose to at once pull down certain buildings with a view of erecting municipal buildings thereon. It is proposed to push on with this work with a view of finding work for some of the unemployed, and application is being made to your Board for the necessary sanction for borrowing powers.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. The Corporation are endeavouring to find as much work as possible.

RUTHIN MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (DENBIGH).

Population (1891), 2,760. Rateable Value (1892–93), £12,023.

Letter from *W. Lloyd*, Town Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

1. THERE has been during the severe weather distress in this district.

2. The distress was met by the Town Council in giving out coal and providing soup for the unemployed. The unemployed also were given work in the borough, and also in a quarry near the town.

SANDWICH MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (KENT).

Population (1891), 2,796. Rateable Value (1892–93), £9,695.

Letter from *D. Baker*, Town Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

1. THERE was considerable distress owing to the scarcity of employment which existed consequent upon the severe frost, though the distress was not of an aggravated character.

2. Distributions of soup were made by voluntary agency two days in the week, and coals were also distributed.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. The unemployed working-class population find ample employment on the break-up of frost, and, under the circumstances, the Council have no suggestion to make in the matter.

STAFFORD MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 20,270. Rateable Value (1892-93), £61,136.

Letter from *C. H. Wright*, Mayor, 23rd March 1895.

1. THE only exceptional distress in this town during this winter has been entirely caused by the severe weather.

2. The Public Authority has done nothing to meet the distress referred to as a strong private committee, headed by myself, has systematically and fully relieved all cases necessary, the funds for which have been privately and sufficiently subscribed.

3. An unemployed register is not kept ; it was tried a year or two ago but failed, as practically, or nearly, all the applicants were idle worthless fellows, and quite beyond hope of working for their living.

4. There is a permanent private committee at work here, of which the Mayor for the time being is president, and hitherto they have always been able to deal with all cases of genuine distress.

TENTERDEN MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (KENT).

Population (1891), 3,429. Rateable Value (1892–93), £13,724.

Letter from *H. S. Norton*, Mayor, 23rd March 1895.

OURS is a purely agricultural district, and we have had no distress beyond what is attributable to the severe weather, and with which we have been able to cope by usual charitable means. There must always be a certain cessation of agricultural work in the winter, but our working classes have been earning good wages ; there has been plenty of work in summer, and everything they consume is cheap and they are enabled to provide for want of employment in winter. The improvident get credit and repay in the summer, which may possibly be their idea of saving. The Board of Guardians have had little, if any, extra demand for relief. I am quite sure that any State interference is unnecessary.

WELSHPOOL MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (MONTGOMERY).

Population (1891), 6,501. Rateable Value (1892–63), £39,471.

Letter from *C. Howell*, Mayor, 23rd March 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district at present, but during the severe weather in January and February a considerable amount arose in consequence thereof.

2. Active steps were taken to meet this distress by a Voluntary Relief Committee, and during the week ended Saturday the 16th February the number relieved was 850.

3. No unemployed register has been maintained.

4. This question will not now apply.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Acton Urban District (Middlesex).

Population (1891), 24,206. Assessable Value (1892-93), £114,733.

Letter from *A. Hemsley*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in the district that the Council are aware of, except such as has been caused by the recent severe frost.

2. What has been done is more particularly detailed in my letter* to you of the 21st February last, in which I explained as to the employment of men who were out of work for the purpose of distributing water throughout the district during the frost. In addition to the above a private fund was raised in the parish and applied for the relief of the most pressing cases of distress, and this, in the opinion of the Council, was sufficient for that present purpose.

3. There is no unemployed register kept as such, but a register was kept of all persons who presented themselves asking for employment and who received relief.

4. The Council have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving the distress, as now that the frost has broken up the men have gone back to their several employments, and are, the Council believe, in full work.

Alvaston and Boulton Urban District (Derby).

Population (1891), 3,116. Assessable Value (1892–93), £7,320.

Letter from *E. Wildsmith*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

There is no exceptional distress whatever in this district from want of employment.

Amble Urban District (Northumberland).

Population (1891), 2,975. Assessable Value (1892–93), £6,832.

Letter from *R. Archer*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

1. There does not appear to be any exceptional distress in the district.
2. No public action has been taken, it not being deemed necessary.
3. No unemployed register kept.
4. No suggestions to make.

Aylesbury Urban District (Buckingham).

Population (1891), 8,680. Assessable Value (1892-93), £23,843.

Letter from *H. Wyatt*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

At the present time there is no unusual distress from want of employment within this district. During the very severe weather some mechanics, such as bricklayers and others employed in out-door occupations, were thrown out of work; but as the weather has now changed, I believe workmen are fairly well employed.

In the agricultural villages in the neighbourhood of the town I understand that much distress has prevailed during the last winter, in consequence of the great agricultural depression.

Beaconsfield Urban District (Buckingham).

Population (1891), 1,773. Assessable Value (1892–93), £4,703.

Letter from *John Rolfe*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

As there was a considerable amount of planting to be done on Sir Edward Lawson's estate, there would be sufficient employment for those wishing for work.

There are now some 50 or 60 men engaged, so that the parish of Beaconsfield can compare very favourably with the surrounding towns and villages.

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*This letter was a reply to the Board's Circular Letter of the 11th February last (*see* note * on page 87), and stated that employment had been found for 200 extra men for about three days a week in carrying water to residents, sifting ashes to be thrown on roads, excavating gravel and sand, &c.

Bedlingtonshire Urban District (Northumberland).

Population (1891), 16,996. Assessable Value (1892–93), £46,752.

Letter from *C. D. Forster*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

There is no exceptional distress in the Bedlingtonshire Urban District.

Bexhill Urban District (East Sussex).

Population (1891), 5,206. Assessable Value (1892–93), £21,413.

Letter from *F. Langham*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. There was during last month some exceptional distress within the district which, in the Chairman's opinion, was due to the severe weather.

2. Such distress was met by the urban authority executing certain road improvements somewhat earlier than they otherwise would have done.

3. No unemployed register is maintained, nor, in the opinion of the Chairman, is it necessary.

4. With the cessation of the severe weather there is no exceptional distress now to be relieved.

Biggleswade Urban District (Bedford).

Population (1891), 4,943. Assessable Value (1892–93), £14,283.

Letter from *T. J. Hooper*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

There has been no exceptional distress in this district, nor has anything been done to necessitate replies to Queries 1, 2, 3, and 4 of your Circular Letter of the 19th February.

Brampton and Walton Urban District (Derby).

Population (1891), 2,532. Assessable Value (1892–93), £18,756.

Letter from *S. E. Swaffield*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in the Council's district.

2. Nothing has been done by the Urban District Council to meet any distress.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. The Urban District Council have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving distress.

Brandon and Byshottles Urban District (Durham).

Population (1891), 14,239. Assessable Value (1892–93), £34,573.

Letter from *W. B. Charlton*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

After careful inquiry, I find as follows: Population 15,385; area acres 6,683, absolutely coal mining. There are six large mines in the district, which, for over 12 months, give an average week of 4·86 days' full employment. There is therefore no distress arising from any cause.

COLWYN BAY AND COLWYN URBAN DISTRICT (DENBIGH).

Population (1891), 4,754. Assessable Value (1892-93), £28,105.

Letter from *J. Porter*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THE distress in this district, which has not been very great, has been met by outside and voluntary aid.

The above authority have done what they could to relieve what distress there was among the working men by providing them with employment. Employment was given to about 60 extra men daily during the severe weather. No applicant for work would be refused.

This locality is peculiarly free from distress, and now that the severe weather is over there is practically none.

COWPEN URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 12,982. Assessable Value (1892-93), £22,880.

Letter from *C. Barron*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

FOR some time past the building trade in this district has been exceptionally brisk and the mines and other works have been fairly busy, consequently there has not been a great amount of distress to deal with.

During the severe weather last month a considerable number of men were out of employment, and in order to relieve the distress consequent upon this, several soup kitchens were opened and soup served to the unemployed three times a week.

DENBY AND CUMBERWORTH URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,164. Assessable Value (1892-93), £7,180.

Letter from *T. Norton*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

DURING the winter months there has been exceptional distress in this locality. This has been caused partly by the severity of the weather, which has rendered out-door employment at a standstill, and also owing to the textile industries carried on here running short time, and in some instances being closed altogether. With a view to mitigating the distress, a relief committee has been formed and collections made, which has for the moment overcome the most pressing needs of the district. An inquiry was held by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors to consider the application for a loan of 1,650*l.* for extension of water mains to a part of this newly-formed district, which has not hitherto had any proper water supply. If the loan is granted it is intended to largely employ the people out of work in digging the pipe trenches along the roads, a work which the people here are well qualified to carry out, as many of them are quarrymen, out-door labourers, miners, &c. It is hoped that your Board's decision to this loan will be favourable and not long delayed, as the matter is urgent, and will at the same time afford relief to those in distress from want of work.

EASTLEIGH URBAN DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891) ——. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *H. White*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

A GREAT amount of distress occurred in the district during the inclement weather, and a special committee was appointed by the Council, and a considerable number of men employed at 2*s.* a day on necessary works in connection with the drainage and street improvements of the district.

ELLAND URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 9,991. Assessable Value (1892-93), £34,164.

Letter from *P. H. Whitwam*, Inspector of Nuisances, 22nd March 1895.

THE temporary distress in Elland was caused through the severe weather.

Temporary means of relief were raised by subscriptions and soup kitchens.

A list of unemployed was kept at the Council's offices, and the work distributed as fairly as possible.

With the break in the weather the distress has largely disappeared.

ESTON URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 10,695. Assessable Value (1892–93), £59,029.

Letter from *T. W. Stainthorpe*, Surveyor, 22nd March 1895.

ALTHOUGH ours is essentially a working-class district, we have no unemployed worth mentioning.

FULWOOD URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 4,112. Assessable Value (1892–93), £13,813.

Letter from *J. Rogerson*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

WE have no distress from want of employment.

GOMERSAL URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,923. Assessable Value (1892–93), £13,460.

Letter from *S. Jackson*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

1. THERE has been very little exceptional distress within the district of this Council during the recent severe weather.

2. The district has been so small that the employment of extra men to clear away the snow, &c., during the recent storm, has appeared to meet all the requirements of the district.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. I have no further suggestions on the subject to offer.

GOOLE URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 15,416. Assessable Value (1892-93), £46,352.

Letter from *G. England*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE has been very little exceptional distress in this district; there is a vast amount of chronic poverty, and in addition to this there has been the severe weather to contend with. The principal persons kept out of work by the frost were bricklayers, masons, and female field-workers.

2. Voluntary agencies have met the distress by giving relief tickets for soup, coal, provisions, &c., at a cost of about 200*l.*; daily number relieved not known.

3. No unemployed register maintained.

4. No suggestions to make, as many refusals to work at snow-clearing were met with when some of the unemployed were offered 3*s.* a day.

GOSPORT AND ALVERSTOKE URBAN DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 25,452. Assessable Value (1892–93), £54,026.

Letter from *E. T. Palmer*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE was no exceptional distress in the district, though through the severity of the weather a considerable number of men of the labouring class were thrown out of work.

2. Some 30 or 40 men were employed by the local authority during the severe frost, in clearing gutters and roads, for which they were paid 2*s.* 6*d.* per diem each. In addition a town committee was formed (outside the Council), and funds to over 300*l.* were raised to meet the necessities of those out of employment.

3. An employed register was not maintained by the Council.

4. I have no suggestions to offer.

HAMPTON URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891) 5,822. Assessable Value (1892–93) £51,760.

Letter from *F. Addenbrooke Kent*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THE Council have no knowledge officially of any exceptional distress, and have not accordingly thought it necessary to start any relief works, or to take any special steps.

HEPWORTH URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 1,007. Assessable Value (1892–93) £2,133.

Letter from *T. Tinker*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895

WE have no able-bodied working men now in this parish needing to be found employment. There are a few old men who are almost past work, but these, through the kindness of friends and getting employed in doing little odd jobs of different kinds, have managed to get through the winter fairly well without help. Perhaps there may be many parishes even near to this of which so favourable a report cannot be given; but I think I am using no exaggeration in making the above statement. The majority of the working men resident here are a provident class of men and look forward to providing against a rainy day; therefore, when a cessation of work comes they are able to pass over the trial without much suffering or want.

I could enlarge considerably upon what I have stated, but I think it will perhaps meet all that you wish to know. I have lived over 75 years in this village and parish, and, therefore, ought to be fairly well acquainted with it.

HINDLEY URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 18,973. Assessable Value (1892–93) £49,889.

Letter from *S. Holt*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

1. THERE is not any exceptional distress in the Urban District of Hindley.
2. The collieries, mills, &c, have been working, and no voluntary agencies have been opened.
3. No unemployed register is kept.
4. No further suggestions appear to be necessary in Hindley.

HOLME URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891) 566. Assessable Value (1892–93) £2,759.

Letter from *H. Whitely*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

WE have no such cases in our district.

HOLYHEAD URBAN DISTRICT (ANGLESEY).

Population (1891), 8,745. Assessable Value (1892–93) £18,717.

Letter from *J. L. Griffith*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.
2. The public authorities did not consider that any action was required on their part.
3. No unemployed register kept.
4. No suggestions to make.

HORSFORTH URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 7,102. Assessable Value (1892–93), £16,993.

Letter from *A. E. Carr*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, and no unemployed register maintained. There was distress a few weeks ago owing to the severe frost, but the people were relieved by private subscriptions, and now nearly all are employed.

HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING URBAN DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 6,476. Assessable Value (1892–93), £18,176.

Letter from *D. Miller*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

IT has been ascertained that there is no distress from want of employment within the district of this Council calling for aid.

HUCKNALL-UNDER-HUTHWAITE URBAN DISTRICT (NOTTINGHAM).

Population (1891), 3,022. Assessable Value (1892–93), £8,119.

Letter from *G. H. Hibbert*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THERE has been no such exceptional distress as called for exceptional measures.

IVYBRIDGE URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 1,782. Assessable Value (1892-93), £4,057.

Letter from *J. Ashford*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THERE is not, nor has there been, any exceptional distress in the district.

KEARSLEY URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 7,993. Assessable Value (1892–93), £22,446.

Letter from *J. Fletcher*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

1. THIS district is to a great extent a colliery, cotton, and paper manufacturing district; these manufactures are fairly well employed, and therefore, what distress has prevailed is due to the severe weather.

2. Nothing has been done by the public authority. A joint relief committee for the township of Kearsley, and for the adjoining one of Farnworth, consisting mostly of members of public authorities was formed, and subscriptions collected, which enabled the committee to give one good meal a day to all the children in the district who chose to avail themselves of it, the average number in the week ended 16th February for the township of Kearsley alone being about 280. In addition to this money grants were made to all cases of distress. Considerably more money was collected than was required, and a surplus is now in the hands of the committee waiting a general meeting of the subscribers to decide what course is to be taken with it.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. I have not any special suggestion to make for the purpose of relieving distress in this district further than that I consider the course taken during the last severe frost to be the most suitable for the requirements of this district, namely, voluntary subscriptions.

KINGSTHORPE URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 7,697. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *W. C. H. Church*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

2. Such persons as have been found in want of employment have been given two days work a week on the footpaths, at 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. At the Council meeting on 13th February it was reported that since 17th December 27*l.* 13*s.* 2*d.* had been thus spent in wages, and 15*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.* for rammel. During the week ended 16th February, 20 men were thus relieved (population over 9,000). This, on the basis of two days' employment for each, gives the average daily employment as $\frac{40}{6} = 6\frac{2}{3}$.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

LEYTON URBAN DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 63,056. Assessable Value (1893-93), £207,475.

Letter from *R. Vincent*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THERE are no manufactories or industries of any importance within the district, the bulk of the residents having employment either within the metropolitan district or the borough of West Ham. There has been exceptional distress in the district during the recent severe weather: it has not been due to circumstances peculiar to the locality, but solely to the severe weather.

The Council are not aware of any voluntary agencies within the district from whom returns of the character asked for can be obtained. Any assistance thus rendered would be of a limited character, and principally apart from Union relief and that given by the Council presently referred to, would be by private benefaction. The weather prevented all out-door work, and it was impossible for this reason to offer employment (which the Council were prepared to do) except on occasions of snowfall, when men were employed throughout the district to clear this away. During the week ended the 16th February there was no such employment.

An unemployed register is not maintained.

LIVERSEDGE URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 13,668. Assessable Value (1892–93) £35,929.

Letter from *T. Mitcheson*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

AS the distress in the district was not considered either abnormal or exceptional, nothing whatever was done further in the matter. Beyond the temporary stoppages of certain kinds of out-door work during the late frost, there was nothing exceptional, nor was it deemed necessary, beyond certain voluntary charitable organisations, to take any extraordinary steps for the alleviation of distress.

No unemployed register has been kept, nor was one considered necessary.

NEWBIGGIN-BY-THE-SEA URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 1,579. Assessable Value (1892–93), £4,494.

Letter from *R. Nicholson*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THERE are at present no unemployed in Newbiggin Urban District.

NORMANTON URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 10,234. Assessable Value (1892–93), £21,151.

Letter from *C. B. L. Fernandes*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the Urban District of Normanton from want of employment due to the severe weather.

NORTH DARLEY URBAN DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 2,179. Assessable Value (1892–93), £6,744.

Letter from *A. Cockeram*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

1. THERE has not been any exceptional distress but what has been amply provided for by either public or private sources.

2. The Board or Council ordered their Surveyor to buy a good quantity of rough stone at the lowest possible price he could get it for, and set all and every man in the district who was out of employment to break it up, and thus give employment to all who liked to avail themselves, but only a very few applied. A public charity has been formed for receiving any contributions, and to distribute same in an organised manner, and about 50 families have been served twice a week with soup, flour, and coals.

3. There is not an unemployed register kept.

NORTHOWRAM URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,014. Assessable Value (1892-93), £7,038.

Letter from *H. E. Foster*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

1. THERE has been exceptional distress in the district owing to the severe weather. A large number of the men in the district usually employed in the quarries have been unable to work on account of the frost.

2. Voluntary agencies have been formed to relieve the distress, and on an average about 20 persons were relieved by such agencies during the week ended the 16th of February.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The distress caused by the severe weather has practically disappeared.

ORMSKIRK URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 6,298. Assessable Value (1892–93), £18,615.

Letter from *H. Riding*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

1. THERE was not much exceptional distress excepting through the frost.

2. There was no organised system of relief excepting that of the Superintendent of police (Mr. Jervis), who, from private contributions whilst the frost lasted, supplied a good meal each day to any distressed children, and in some cases to adults.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. As the weather has now been some time favourable there is no necessity for extraordinary relief.

OTLEY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING),

Population (1891), 7,838. Assessable Value (1892-93), £21,356.

Letter from *W. J. Newstead*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE are no exceptional unemployed here except such as was due to the late frost. During that time relief was given by giving employment in removing snow, &c., and distributing soup, coals, and flour.

PAUL URBAN DISTRICT (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 5,977. Assessable Value (1892–93), £9,437.

Letter from *R. W. Aitken*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

THERE has been a considerable amount of distress in this district during the last three months caused mainly by the unusually boisterous and frosty weather.

1. (*a*) Fishermen were unable to put to sea, and when they could venture fish were driven from the coast into deeper water. (*b*) Farm labourers, such as are paid by the day in this market-gardening district, were unable to work during the severe frost. (*c*) Mechanics' labourers were unemployed for the same reason.

2. Fishermen's credit at the small shops is generally good, and most of them can obtain, at least, bread and coals. Those who could not were relieved by private charity; but there was no organised system of relief. The reason is, that spring mackerel fishing and potato planting may begin any fit day after the 1st of February, and directly that begins the necessity for help disappears.

3. No register is kept of the unemployed; the usual winter's distress is of short duration, and is mostly felt by certain families, who, unfortunately, are not provident, and are generally known, and, I may say, recognised.

4. The Urban District Council were in hopes that their proposed water-supply schemes for Newlyn and Mousehole would have furnished a large employ for those who were out of work this winter; but difficulties have not yet entirely cleared away. I would suggest that, against another winter, the Urban Authority should apply for an annual series of small loans (which being spread over a long period for repayment would not materially burden the rates) to carry out much-needed improvements, *e.g.*, widening and straightening dangerous thoroughfares, cleaning and protecting wells and watercourses, and many other needed small works which could be mentioned. These loans, say, from 50*l.* to 100*l.*, would, in my opinion, go a long way towards removing the actual distress in this district during the winter months.

The Urban Authority are about to apply for such a loan at the present time for the purpose of widening one of the most objectionable corners in Newlyn main road; if obtained, this will furnish employ for those who have not yet obtained any in their ordinary business.

ROTHWELL URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 10,172. Assessable Value (1892–93), £22,766.

Letter from *J. B. Wimbush*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1 and 2. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district. During the continuance of the severe frost the quarrymen in the district were out of employment, but they are now at work again.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. No suggestions to make.

ST. GEORGE URBAN DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 36,718. Assessable Value (1892–93), £69,269.

Letter from *J. Stubbs*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

DURING the winter considerable sewerage works have been undertaken in the district, and employment found for over 100 men. The recent severe frost caused so many to be out of employment, and on the verge of starvation, that in addition to a relief fund which was started, and several hundreds of pounds distributed, the Council arranged for the removal of a refuse heap at a colliery adjoining the public park, for the purpose of levelling a portion of the latter for cricket and football. Three hundred men were employed daily, and 600 men thus had two days work per week. At the termination of the frost some 150 men were left without employment, and these have been employed since in three shift of 50 men each, which has enabled them to have two days work each. A further loan has been obtained for sewerage works, and this, together with work becoming a little more plentiful during the spring months, will leave little to complain of in this district.

SEATON URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 1,293. Assessable Value (1892–93), £4,927.

Letter from *E. H. Milton*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE were very few cases, indeed, of persons being without employment, and certainly no severe distress existed in the district.

SHIRLEY AND FREEMANTLE URBAN DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 15,898. Assessable Value (1892–93), £51,732.

Letter from *W. A. Killby*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

THE Shirley and Freemantle District Council have afforded relief during the last month to a number of the unemployed who resided in the joint district of Shirley and Freemantle, at an outlay or cost of a trifle under 40*l.* The work done by the men was of a profitable and useful character, and I believe I am correct in stating that little or no distress now exists, the men having resumed their ordinary labour.

SOUTH HORNSEY URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 16,892. Assessable Value (1892–93), £85,949.

Letter from *E. B. Bennett*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress in this district to necessitate any extraordinary measures for dealing with the same; during the very severe weather a few applications were made by men for employment and extra hands were put on to clear the roads of snow.

SOWERBY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 4,051. Assessable Value (1892–93), £9,309.

Letter from *E. Booth*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. I AM not aware of any exceptional distress in the district. The residents are chiefly engaged in the manufacturing and iron trades, and, therefore, there are but few out-door workers.

2. The Council engaged the out-door workers to remove snow from the most important highways from time to time.

3. No unemployed register maintained.

4. No suggestion to make.

SUTTON BRIDGE URBAN DISTRICT (PARTS OF HOLLAND).

Population (1891), 2,004. Assessable Value (1892–93), £5,650.

Letter from *W. J. Wright*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THERE has not been any exceptional distress in this district requiring exceptional relief, and the usual distribution of soup and other things has been sufficient as heretofore for aged and needy cases.

SUTTON-IN-ASHFIELD URBAN DISTRICT (NOTTINGHAM).

Population (1891), 10,562. Assessable Value (1892–93), £15,208.

Letter from *G. H. Hibbert*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

1. THERE was no exceptional distress in this district except during the very severe weather.

2. It was met by the opening of soup kitchens and distribution of bread by public subscribers

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

SWANAGE URBAN DISTRICT (DORSET).

Population (1891), 2,674. Assessable Value (1892–93), £8,027.

Letter from *T. Randell*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

1. THERE is no distress in this district. There are not sufficient men to be got to do the work now carried on.

2. During the severe frost a voluntary soup kitchen was started.

3. We have no unemployed register.

4. There is no need of any exceptional measure here to relieve distress.

SWINDON NEW TOWN URBAN DISTRICT (WILTS).

Population (1891), 27,295. Assessable Value (1892–93), £97,784.

Letter from *T. Brain*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

THE distress existing in the district has been largely caused by the prolonged frost, which has now happily passed away. A Town's Meeting was called by myself and a large and representative Committee formed to take steps. We opened a soup kitchen and distributed about 80 gallons of soup daily, and about 60 loaves of bread. There was also another Committee engaged in distributing bread and soup. The number of unemployed as per our unemployed register was about 150, many of which have since found employment. We have, as a Council, decided to employ as many as possible in digging at our sewage farm, and are only waiting for the permission of your Board *re* proposed Cemetery Loan to put on more men.

TEIGNMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 8,292 Assessable Value (1892-93), £31,755.

Letter from *W. R. Hall Jordan*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

DURING the late inclement weather there were no works in which those men who were unable to work could be employed by the Council, but everything that could be done to assist in alleviating distress, consequent on want of work throughout the district, was done. Subscriptions were raised and kindly and judiciously managed. Work has now been resumed, and there is no lack of employment, and at present there is no exceptional distress in the district.

TETTENHALL URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 5,145. Assessable Value (1892-93), £18,126.

Letter from *A. M. Manby*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE is at the present time no exceptional distress in the district of my Council; such distress as existed some short time ago was almost entirely attributable to the severity of the weather.

My Council could not see their way to maintain an unemployed register, and private assistance was forthcoming to alleviate such distress as existed.

URMSTON URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 4,042. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *T. J. Rowland*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THERE is no exception distress in this district at present. During the late frost there was the usual amount of distress owing to people being unable to work, but the open weather lately has remedied all that. There has been no abnormal distress in Urmston.

WARBLINGTON URBAN DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 2,840. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. Mosdell*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

WE have no distress through want of employment in our parish at the present time. During the very severe weather many were thrown out of work, when distress soon followed which was relieved by a powerful relief committee. There appears to be ample work for all in this neighbourhood.

WEDNESFIELD URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 4,949. Assessable Value (1892-93), £8,226.

Letter from *T. Evans*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

1. THE distress was not more than usual in severe weather.
2. The cases requiring relief were assisted by a fund raised by voluntary contributions.
3. No unemployed register was kept; it would have been unnecessary the cases having been so few.
4. No suggestions to make.

WHITEFIELD URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 10,781. Assessable Value (1892-93), £38,011.

Letter from *J. P. Monks*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THERE is not any exceptional distress in the district, and it has not been found necessary to take any steps for relieving the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. For the purpose of meeting any cases that might arise a sub-committee was appointed to consult with the Relieving Officer and find employment on the roads or at the sewage farm for any necessitous cases, but no cases were found requiring any such help. The Council regret to observe that many other districts are in a less happy condition than theirs.

WHITWOOD URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 4,806. Assessable Value (1892-93), £17,541.

Letter from *C. A. Phillips*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THE Council has not found it necessary to provide employment for the unemployed in their district.

WILSDEN URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891) 2,764. Assessable Value (1892–93), £7,862.

Letter from *A. Ambler*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

WE have very little distress about us here, and what there has been has been attended to by the people in the district.

WOODFORD URBAN DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 11,024. Assessable Value (1892–93), £55,119.

Letter from *A. Buck*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

THERE is not any exceptional distress in the district, any want of employment during the severe weather may now be considered at an end, and there is every prospect of building operations being above the average during the coming summer.

The Corporation of London, the Woodford Council, and private residents are jointly contributing towards a fund for the draining of Woodford Green, but it is expected full wages will be required for the work.

An unemployed register is not required or maintained.

The Woodford Charity Organisation Society is well supported, and fully meets any occasional distress.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

ABERYSTWITH RURAL DISTRICT (CARDIGAN).

Population (1891), 14,377. Rateable Value (1892–93), £67,411.

Letter from *H. Hughes, jun.*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

No exceptional distress exists in this neighbourhood.

BATH RURAL DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 23,352. Rateable Value (1892-93), £134,420.

Letter from *W. E. Winckworth*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THE Council have no knowledge of exceptional distress from want of employment in their district.

BEAMINSTER RURAL DISTRICT (DORSET AND SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 9,689. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *R. O. Leigh*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THE Chairman is not aware there is any distress from want of employment in this Rural District.

BELLINGHAM RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 5,442. Rateable Value (1892–93), £78,958.

Letter from *R. Riddle*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THE population of this district is such that it does not require any special means to be adopted to deal with want of employment, and most especially during the winter has work been more plentiful than in ordinary seasons, owing to the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Company being engaged in constructing a new line of pipes through the district, and whose operations have never ceased during the whole season.

BETTWS-Y-COED RURAL DISTRICT (CARNARVON).

Population (1891), 5,598. Rateable Value (1893-93), £———.

Letter from *H. Pierce*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THERE is not or has been any special distress in this district, and what hardship did exist was due to the severity of the weather. The Council have, therefore, no suggestions to make on the subject.

BIGGLESWADE RURAL DISTRICT (BEDFORD).

Population (1891), 21,864. Rateable Value (1892-93), £122,884.

Letter from *T. J. Hooper*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress in this district, nor has anything been done to necessitate replies to Queries 1, 2, 3, and 4 of your Circular Letter of the 19th February.

BLACKWELL RURAL DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 16,773. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *G. H. Hibbert*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THE little exceptional distress caused by the frost was amply met by soup and bread distributed by persons subscribing to a general fund for the purpose.

BRAILES RURAL DISTRICT (WARWICK).

Population (1891), 7,202. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. E. Hiron*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.

2. No action has been taken by public authorities, but in most places during the severe weather there was a voluntary distribution of coal and soup.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. It is suggested that the matter be left to voluntary assistance.

BRIDGNORTH RURAL DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 9,185. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *W. L. Dodgson*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

THE matter was brought before the Council, and the general opinion was that hardly any distress was caused by the severe frost; the extra care of stock kept most of the men employed, and very few men were idle except from choice. In this district the want of good men to do the work is much more felt than the want of work. I regret that the paper of queries has been mislaid, but think the foregoing remarks give the required information.

BRIDGWATER RURAL DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 20,837. Rateable Value (1892-93), £193,051.

Letter from *C. G. Anderson*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

THERE was no exceptional distress within the jurisdiction of the Bridgwater Rural District Council, and therefore no relief works were undertaken. And I may add that the applications for relief at the Board of Guardians, of which I am Chairman, hardly reached the average during the severe weather. During three weeks, however, we granted an extra 6*d.* per week to the head of the family towards the purchase of fuel.

BROMYARD RURAL DISTRICT (HEREFORD).

Population (1891),———. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *E. L. Cave*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

1. THERE has been no exceptional distress in the district, except that caused by the very severe weather.

2. A considerable sum was raised by voluntary agencies, and distributions of coal and food were made, which, it is believed, met all the requirements, as no applications for relief have been made to the Guardians by able-bodied poor.

3. No register of unemployed is in existence here, though I think it would be an advantage if one were established.

4. The suggestion I should like to make is, that a labour home should be established in each Union centre, where all persons purporting to be seeking work should be sent, and where work of various kinds should be found suited to the applicants, and this without the stigma of the casual ward, and all persons not availing themselves of this opportunity should be treated vigorously as rogues and vagabonds.

CATHERINGTON RURAL DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 2,990. Rateable Value (1892-93), £15,280.

Letter from *E. R. Longcroft*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THERE was scarcely any distress from want of employment. With regard to the few cases which did occur, employment was found without any difficulty, and without the applicants having to seek the assistance of the rates.

DEPWADE RURAL DISTRICT (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 19,523. Rateable Value (1892-93), £89,148.

Letter from *J. Furness*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

IN this district it is not considered there is any exceptional distress from want of employment, although more persons than usual are out of employ, in consequence, no doubt, of the great depressiou in agriculture, making it difficult for employers to find money for any labour not absolutely necessary.

EATON BRAY RURAL DISTRICT (BEDFORD).

Population (1891), 3,440. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *John Britten*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

1. EATON Bray Parish: distress caused by severe weather, agricultural depression, the failing of the plaiting industry.

2. Local contributions have been given in coal, bread, groceries, &c.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. Agricultural improvements needed to meet the depression of this locality.

The other parishes in this district are Billington, Eggington, Heath and Reach, and Stanbridge.
There has been no exceptional distress in these parishes. Local aid has been very generous during the cold weather.

ELLESMERE RURAL DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 8,119. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *R. E. Lloyd*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional amount of distress in this district. The district is mainly agricultural, and the demand for labour on the land is about equal to the supply throughout the year. Bricklayers and their labourers have, doubtless, suffered to an unusual extent this winter, owing to the protracted frost, but they are a small class in the district, and in most cases they are able to obtain other work and means of subsistence during the suspension of their ordinary work.

EPPING RURAL DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), ———. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Windus*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE has not been any exceptional distress from want of employment in this district. During the severe weather there were certainly very many men unemployed who usually are employed, but the severe weather was the cause of this, and it is believed that most of such men are now again employed.

Out-door relief to able-bodied men was granted by the Guardians, as is always the case in winter, and, in addition, various private parochial charitable organizations materially assisted in dealing with deserving cases, but this Council has no means of knowing to what extent; but so far as is known, the extent was not much greater than in previous winters, and in so far as it was greater the severe weather was the reason.

FARNBOROUGH RURAL DISTRICT (WARWICK).

Population (1891), 1,697. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *R. R. R. Brown*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

1. THE six parishes and two hamlets which form the Farnborough District Council is small, only two being over 300 inhabitants. The distress has not been what might be called serious, any further than what the severe weather naturally brings.

2. There has been nothing done by the Farnborough Rural District Council but what there has been by private individuals, which has helped very much. The Council intend to give the matter of the unemployed their careful consideration, so that they may have a plan whenever an emergency may occur.

GOOLE RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 7,996. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *G. England*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE has been slight exceptional distress in this district.

2. Nothing has been done by the public authorities nor by voluntary agencies to meet the distress, except, in the latter case, by private individuals.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained.

4. It is difficult to suggest how to relieve such distress as we have in this district without increasing the sum expended for out-door relief.

HAVANT RURAL DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 3,547. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *E. R. Longcroft*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE was scarcely any distress from want of employment. With regard to the few cases which did occur, employment was found without any difficulty and without the applicants having to seek the assistance of the rates.

HERTFORD RURAL DISTRICT (HERTFORD).

Population (1891), 8,153. Rateable Value (1892-93), £53,941.

Letter from *T. J. Sworder*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THE Chairman is not aware of any exceptional distress in this district.

HIGHWORTH AND SWINDON RURAL DISTRICT (WILTS).

Population (1891), 14,309. Rateable Value (1892–93), £87,494.

Letter from *A. D. Hussey-Freke*, Chairman, 24th March 1895.

NO exceptional distress exists, or has existed, in this district.

LLANDOVERY RURAL DISTRICT (CARMARTHEN AND BRECKNOCK).

Population (1891), 9,894. Rateable Value (1892–93), £63,568.

Letter from *T. Jones*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.
2. Nothing has been done to meet the distress by public authorities or voluntary agencies.
3. No unemployed register is maintained.

LUTTERWORTH RURAL DISTRICT (LEICESTER).

Population (1891), 9,779. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *T. C. Bodycote*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. No exceptional distress in the district.
2. Voluntary soup kitchens, &c., have been opened as usual.
3. No unemployed register maintained.
4. No suggestions to make.

MALPAS RURAL DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 4,318. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *S. H. Sandbach*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

THE district is entirely agricultural ; and as the farm labourers are paid standing wages, in almost every case the severe weather makes little difference to them ; in fact, I have heard of no exceptional distress in this immediate neighbourhood.

MAYFIELD RURAL DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 4,160. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *F. Charlesworth*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

THE distress has been only slight indeed, and, I think, entirely met by the kindness and benevolence of the wealthy and charitably-disposed of the neighbourhood.

MONKS KIRBY RURAL DISTRICT (WARWICK).

Population (1891), 1,705. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *T. C. Bodycote*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. No exceptional distress.
2. Voluntary soup-kitchens, &c., have been opened as usual.
3. No unemployed register kept.
4. No suggestions to make.

MUTFORD AND LOTHINGLAND RURAL DISTRICT (EAST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 11,676. Rateable Value (1892-93), £54,238.

Letter from *F. Peskett*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

IT has not been found necessary to take any exceptional measures in this district. Some additional relief has been allowed by the Guardians during the severe weather, but no relief fund has been started nor any unemployed register maintained.

NUNEATON RURAL DISTRICT (WARWICK).

Population (1891), 1,686. Rateable Value (1892-93), £ ———.

Letter from *J. Estlin*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE has been slight exceptional distress, due to the late severe weather only.

2. The distress has been dealt with by private charity.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. Now that the severe weather has gone, out-door employment has been resumed.
The Relieving Officer states that the labouring classes do not like to pauperise themselves.

PEWSEY RURAL DISTRICT (WILTS).

Population (1891), 11,713. Rateable Value (1892-93), £53,339.

Letter from *W. J. Rowden*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

THERE is not, nor has there been, any difficulty in providing employment for all who apply for it in this Union during the past winter.

POOLE RURAL DISTRICT (DORSET).

Population (1891), 3,821. Rateable Value (1892-93), £19,263.

Letter from *P. E. L. Budge*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress in the Rural District of this Union that rendered it necessary for the District Council to take any steps to provide work or employment.

PWLLHELI RURAL DISTRICT (CARNARVON).

Population (1891), 17,555. Rateable Value (1892-93), £58,997.

Letter from *R. O. Jones*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

No distress from want of employment exists at present in the Pwllheli Rural District. There were, of course, during the recent hard frost, a large number of artisans and day labourers out of employment, and to whom the District Council could then render no help owing to the severe weather. Voluntary agencies prevented any serious suffering.
No register of the unemployed exists.

REIGATE RURAL DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 13,934. Rateable Value (1892-93), £127,589.

Letter from *F. C. Morrison*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE has been no exceptional distress in the district other than that occasioned by the severe weather, and which has now ceased to exist.

2. Nothing has been done by public authorities to meet distress, but the usual voluntary agencies have been at work during the winter.

3. No unemployed register has been maintained.

4. No suggestion to make.

RINGWOOD RURAL DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 5,545. Rateable Value (1892-93), £29,672.

Letter from *G. P. Brown*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

No distress exists in this district from want of employment. During the continuance of the severe frost some few men were necessarily out of work; but now, agricultural and other work that could not be carried on whilst the frost lasted, is much in arrear, and there is more than sufficient employment for all.

SKEGBY RURAL DISTRICT (NOTTINGHAM).

Population (1891), 4,727. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *G. H. Hibbert*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THERE has been no such distress from this cause as necessitated any special means of dealing with it.

SOUTHAM RURAL DISTRICT (WARWICK AND NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 10,250. Rateable Value (1892-93), £81,408.

Letter from *W. Wood*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress from want of employment in this district.

SOUTH MOLTON RURAL DISTRICT (DEVON AND SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 12,314. Rateable Value (1892-93), £88,004.

Letter from *R. L. Riccard*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress, nor has there been, in consequence of the late severe weather, or otherwise.

SOUTH SHIELDS RURAL DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 12,797. Rateable Value (1892-93), £82,654.

Letter from *E. J. J. Browell*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

THERE does not appear to be any appreciable amount of exceptional distress; in fact, the only class of the population amongst which it could arise would be that of the coal miners, and, so far as I am able to ascertain, there does not appear to be anything unusual in the present state of employment. The necessity for any action on the part of local authorities or voluntary agencies has not therefore arisen.

An unemployed register is not maintained within the district, so far as I am aware.

As the necessity for taking any action in the matter within this district has not arisen, I have not given the question serious consideration, and am therefore not in a position to submit any suggestions as to the manner of relieving distress.

SOUTH STONEHAM RURAL DISTRICT (SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 25,363. Rateable Value (1892-93), £123,729.

Letter from *J. Robins*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THERE was distress owing to the severe weather, and it was met mainly by private charities. No unemployed register is kept. No suggestions to offer.

THAKEHAM RURAL DISTRICT (WEST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 8,049. Rateable Value (1892-93), £52,255.

Letter from *H. Parsons*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THIS matter was before my Board of Guardians and District Council a short time since, when it was acknowledged that there was no exceptional distress in this district; the Guardians' statistics point to the same conclusion.

2. Nothing is being done, consequently, by either the public authorities or private agency in the way of special relief.

3. There is no unemployed register in this district.

THORNEY RURAL DISTRICT (ISLE OF ELY).

Population (1891), 1,878. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *W. Horrell*, Chairman, 22nd March 1895.

WE have no men out of employment in this district, and there has been no distress amongst the working class this winter. A few were out of work through the frost, but they are now fully occupied.

WAREHAM AND PURBECK RURAL DISTRICT (DORSET).

Population (1891), 11,765. Rateable Value (1892–93), £ 60,498.

Letter from *F. Filliter*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THERE has been no more exceptional distress from want of employment than is ordinary during the winter months

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WELLS RURAL DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 11,380. Rateable Value (1892–93), £106,345.

Letter from *J. R. Keen*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

THERE is no distress, nor has there been any, in my (chiefly agricultural) Rural District from want of employment many employers of labour would put on more if good men could be got, and wages as high as ever. The urban parts have suffered more, some tradesmen, such as masons, not working for many weeks; but needy cases have been met by the Mayor and citizens, also in some degree by the Board of Guardians, and increased out-door relief given to old and destitute people during the severe weather.

WESTBURY AND WHORWELLSDOWN RURAL DISTRICT (WILTS).

Population (1891), 10,166. Rateable Value (1892–93), £65,882

Letter from *H. W. Pinniger*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE have been more applications for out-door relief than for many years past, but these have almost entirely been owing to the recent severe weather, and the distress has been only temporary.

2. Nothing has been done in this Union beyond the administration of relief by the Guardians, except that assistance has been afforded by means of private charity.

3. No unemployed register has been kept.

4. The District Council do not deem it necessary to make any suggestions, as the distress is only temporary.

WEST FIRLE RURAL DISTRICT (EAST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 2,438. Rateable Value (1892-93), £22,853.

Letter from *E. Hillman*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, therefore the Council have not considered it necessary to take any action with reference thereto, and have no suggestions to make thereon.

WEYMOUTH RURAL DISTRICT (DORSET).

Population (1891), 9,320. Rateable Value (1892-93), £58,484.

Letter from *G. B. Welsford*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

THERE is no special distress in this district.

WIRRAL RURAL DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 18,707. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *T. Davies*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district at present, although I believe there was to some small extent in the more populous parts during the late severe weather.

2. Such distress as may have existed was met by voluntary agencies, and no application was made (so far as I am aware) to public authorities. I have no information as to the daily number relieved by the voluntary agencies.

3. There is no unemployed register maintained in this district.

4. I have no suggestions to make for relieving distress in this district, as I believe work may be obtained by all who are desirous of obtaining it.

WREXHAM RURAL DISTRICT (DENBIGH, FLINT, AND CHESTER).

Population (1891), 49,243. Rateable Value (1892-93), £203,397.

Letter from *J. O. Bury*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district from want of employment. During the late great frost there was a considerable amount of distress amongst the unemployed, but it was relieved by the various voluntary charitable agencies.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

Clerkenwell Parish.

Population (1891), 66,216. Rateable Value (1892-93), £370,437.

Letter from *W. Robson*, Chairman of Vestry, 25th March 1895.

Herewith I send information as to employment given by the Vestry during January, February, and March to those that were out of work. Allow me to point out that all our regular staff of paviors, masons, and labourers being prevented by the severe frost from following their usual employment were also engaged in cleansing the streets. It is, in my opinion, quite impossible for the Vestry to give work in the winter months to those who need it, as a large proportion are thrown out of employ through the frost, and all the Vestry works are those of paving, road-making, or sewers, which cannot be done in frosty weather. A large number of those employed in cleaning away snow, &c., were quite unsuited for the work either from the nature of their previous avocations or other reasons. I may add that, as the result of careful inquiry, I am of opinion, that apart from that caused by the severity of the weather, there has been no exceptional distress in Clerkenwell, although there are always a large number (especially old people) needing help.

(Information above referred to).

Abstract showing extra men employed cleansing streets, and the cost thereof.

13	January	1895,	112 men.	21	February	1895,	12 men
14	„	„	12 „	22	„	„	12 „
16	„	„	10 „	25	„	„	30 „
17	„	„	10 „	26	„	„	24 „
18	„	„	10 „	27	„	„	24 „
19	„	„	10 „	28	„	„	14 „
21	„	„	11 „	1	March	„	13 „
22	„	„	176 „	2	„	„	13 „
23	„	„	180 „	5	„	„	69 „
25	„	„	15 „	6	„	„	21 „
26	„	„	15 „	7	„	„	21 „
28	„	„	236 „	8	„	„	22 „
29	„	„	120 „	9	„	„	22 „
1	February	„	223 „	11	„	„	21 „
2	„	„	205 „	12	„	„	22 „
4	„	„	125 „	21	„	„	22 „
6	„	„	239 „				

The total cost of the above was 355*l.* 0*s.* 7*d.* Six hundred and fifty-eight men registered their names as being out of work. About 1,300 post-cards were sent out offering work to the men, the names being taken in rotation. On the first fall of snow only about 30 men turned up out of 120 sent to. After this the average was about 75 to 80 per cent. It was found that, although the post-cards answered satisfactorily on the whole, a number of men, by some means, got cards addressed to other men, and statements were also made that the cards were sold. It is probable that a few of the men gave two or three names and addresses, as it was, of course, impossible to remember all the men.

23rd March 1895. (signed) *W. Iron*, Surveyor.

Lewisham District Board of Works.

Population (1891), 92,647. Rateable Value (1892-93), £642,934.

Letter from *T. W. Williams*, Chairman, 25th March 1895.

1. I am not aware that there is any exceptional distress in this district. There were, as in other parts of the Metropolis, a large number of workmen out of employ during the recent severe weather.

2. This Board employed a large number of extra men in cleansing the streets after the snow-falls, and disbursed a considerable sum of money in wages in this work. On the 6th February last the Board employed 603 extra men, that being the highest number during the frost. The Board were at this time, owing to the severe state of the weather, unable to carry out any other kind of work.

3. An unemployed register has not been used in this district.

4. I have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving such distress, but my Board would be prepared to do anything in their power with that object if the necessary authority were given them to expend money for the purpose.

II.—COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Ipswich County Borough.

Population (1891), 57,360. Rateable Value (1892-93), £223,007

Letter from *W. Bantoft*, Town Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

1. There has been exceptional distress in this district, partly due to the general slackness of trade, and partly to the severe weather.

2. Work was provided by the Corporation for a considerable number of men, and help in money and kind was given by various organisations throughout the winter. It is difficult to say what number were relieved, but it was considerable.

3. An unemployed register is maintained at the Ipswich Labour Bureau under the superintendence of the Rev. Wickham Tozer, with good results.

4. The Corporation consider that where, in order to find employment for men, they proceed to carry out works not absolutely necessary, and the cost of which is much increased when executed with the so-called "unemployed labour" in the winter season, the increased cost should be defrayed out of the poor rate. The increased cost is the cost of relief, and it is misleading and improper not to show it in the municipal accounts as such, and as it is relief, the Guardians for the relief of the poor should provide the money. I am directed to forward copy of a letter, dated 10th January last, which I was ordered to write to Mr. Vulliamy, the Clerk to the Guardians of the Ipswich Union, and copy of the Board's views upon that letter contained in a letter addressed to Mr. Vulliamy on the 18th January. The Corporation consider that the Local Government Board have much hindered the providing of work by their letter, and that the responsibility for the distress, consequent upon want of employment, rests in a great measure with them.

(Letters above referred to).

Dear Sir, Town Hall, Ipswich, 10 January 1895.

Owing to the inclement weather the Surveyor was compelled a week ago to discharge 25 labourers who had been engaged on a section of the new sewer for the marsh district. He reports that he has no work requiring to be done which can judiciously be put in hand whilst this weather lasts, and he reports also that a number of private persons in the town, and also members of your Board of Guardians have sent him many men with a request that he would find them employment. He has brought the matter before a sub-committee of the Sanitary Authority for consideration, and it appears that the only work that could be found for these unemployed by the Borough Surveyor, is in raising stone, but this would involve a considerable outlay for appliances, and, moreover, experience has shown that the cost to the Sanitary Authority, per ton of stone raised by the unemployed, is considerably in excess of what the cost would be if the authority procured such stone in the usual way of their business. The Sanitary Authority have already sufficient stone to meet their present and future requirements, and inasmuch as they have at their disposal only a limited sum each year for road material, they do not see their way to incur, what is from their point of view, an unnecessary expenditure in excess of the sum provided. Many of the men who could be put on to stone raising have already been out of work for several weeks, and the Sanitary Authority are of opinion that it would be wise to provide work for such men at once, if possible, or the applicants will be obliged to make away with their furniture and little effects with very slight prospects of ever getting them back. It is submitted that a little assistance from the Guardians at this juncture would prevent the distress in many cases from becoming more acute, and would in reality be a saving to the ratepayers and tend to keep many families from becoming chargeable. I am directed to ask weather in the event of the Sanitary Authority opening special stone pits, and taking the management of same, and putting to work there such able-bodied men as may be recommended by the Guardians, the Guardians would be prepared to pay the difference between the cost of the road material so raised and the cost if purchased in the ordinary way, and will also pay 25 per cent. of the cost of the appliances provided for the use of the men.

Yours, &c.
(signed) *Will. Bantoft*, Town Clerk.

A. F. Vulliamy, Esq.,
Clerk to the Guardians, Ipswich.

Local Government Board, Whitehall, S.W.,
18 January 1895.

Sir,

I am directed by the Local Government Board to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th inst., forwarding a copy of a letter which the Guardians of the Ipswich Union have received from the Town Clerk of Ipswich relative to the employment of able-bodied men.

I am directed to state, in reply to the inquiry of the Guardians, that the Board are not aware of any legal authority under which the payment referred to in the last paragraph of the Town Clerk's letter could be made by the Guardians.

The Board trust that, with the change in the weather, the men who were out of work may have found re-employment.

I am, &c.
(signed) *W. E. Knollys*,
Assistant Secretary.

A. F. Vulliamy, Esq.,
Clerk to Guardians of Ipswich Union.

Wigan County Borough.

Population (1891), 55,013. Rateable Value (1892-93), £169,032.

Letter from *J. Charnock*, Town Clerk, 25th March 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in the district, except such as is due to the recent severe weather and general depression in local industries.

2. Soup kitchens and the like were established, and special relief distributed during the frost.

3. There is no unemployed register kept.

4. His Worship has no suggestion to make at present, as he believes the distress has disappeared to a very large extent.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Conway Municipal Borough (Carnarvon).

Population (1891), 3,442. Rateable Value (1892-93), £18,804.

Letter from *T. E. Parry*, Town Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

The Town Council found employment for a fortnight for 100 men and youths who were out of work on account of the severe weather, and for the week ended 15th February they paid at the rate of 3*s.* per day for a maximum week of four days to most of the men 39*l.* 9*s.* 6*d.* and for the week ended 22nd February, 60*l.* 12*s.* 3*d.*, and the men were employed in breaking stones and quarrying.

Flint Municipal Borough (Flint).

Population (1891), 5,247. Rateable Value (1892-93), £21,973.

Letter from *H. Taylor*, Town Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

1. There has been, and is now, exceptional distress in this district, principally from the large Alkali Works, formerly belonging to Messrs. Muspratt Brothers and Huntley, but now included in the United Alkali Company, being closed for three months, that is to say for the months of December, January, and February, and even now the works are only partially going; prior to December the works were running only about half time, these works are the principal stay of the place, and brought the adjoining colliery to a standstill. In addition to this the severe weather caused a stagnation of trade in the other parts of the borough. I may say almost the entire population, which altogether consist of working classes, has been on the point of starvation.

2. As the municipal funds at disposal are small, the annual rateable value some 20,000*l.*, and 1*d.* rates only produce about 50*l.*, voluntary agencies, including the Mayor and principal councillors and tradesmen in the town, have been employed to meet the distress. A committee was appointed at a public meeting early in December, people in the neighbourhood were appealed to for funds, and throughout have subscribed generously. A soup kitchen was formed, and a regular system of relief offered, now, however, the funds are nearly exhausted, and more is urgently needed.

3. No unemployed register is kept, as the greatest number are unemployed at the works, and their books are sufficient for a register.

4. This borough is in the Union of Holywell, they assess, levy, and collect our Poor Rates, and the Guardians consist chiefly in the other part of the Union, and they direct the out-door relief. I suggest that our Town Council should have the power of their own money collected as Poor Rates, the farmers cannot possibly know as much as the managers of the works and the tradesmen of the town, of the wants of the inhabitants, then relief works could be provided for.

Lydd Municipal Borough (Kent).

Population (1891), 2,051. Rateable Value (1892-93), £11,175.

Letter from *H. Stringer*, Town Clerk, 25th March 1895.

There was no distress from want of employment in the borough necessitating unusual measures of relief on the part of the Corporation. The cleansing and repair of the streets and roads at this time of the year provides employment for those who are not engaged otherwise.

Ossett Municipal Borough (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 10,984. Rateable Value (1892-93), £41,852.

Letter from *W. Brook*, Town Clerk, 25th March 1895.

There are not many persons unemployed in this town, and any cases of distress that existed during the late frost were relieved by a relief committee, of which the Mayor acted as Chairman.

I may also inform you that the Corporation are now carrying out certain public improvements which offer facilities for the employment of persons out of work.

Pembroke Municipal Borough (Pembroke).

Population (1891), 14,978. Rateable Value (1892-93), £38,629.

Letter from *W. O. Hulm*, Town Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

There is no exceptional distress in this neighbourhood arising from any circumstances peculiar to the locality or to the severe weather. If there is any at all, it probably arises from the discharges of men lately employed in Her Majesty's Dockyard.

RICHMOND MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (SURREY).

Population (1891), 26,875. Rateable Value (1892-93), £227,987.

Letter from *F. Senior*, Town Clerk, 25th March 1895.

1. THERE is not any exceptional distress in the district of this borough from circumstances peculiar to the locality, other than that due to the late severe weather.

2. Steps were taken to meet the distress by the public authority, by giving work to as many hands as possible, and especially during the severest weather, in a very extensive removal of the snow, and by voluntary agencies, viz., the establishment of soup-kitchens by the Mayor and Mayoress, who distributed 3,000 quarts of soup and as many pounds of bread, and also 200 sacks of coal, and by other persons, especially the Philanthropic Society, and being well supported by personal assistance through the clergy and ministers of all denominations, and by voluntary contributions; but it is quite impossible to give even an approximate statement of the number of persons relieved, the relief being given without too rigid regard to the applicants, and it is believed that every person who stood in need received assistance.

3. An "unemployed" register was maintained at the borough depôt. Every name therein was called over every morning, and each man was put on in his turn; no one present was passed over, with very satisfactory results to the number assisted with work.

4. No suggestions occur to the Mayor to be made, as the recent change in the weather has restored work.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

ARNOLD URBAN DISTRICT (NOTTINGHAM).

Population (1891) 7,769. Assessable Value (1892-93), £12,454.

Letter from *C. J. Spencer*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

THERE was no doubt distress in this district during the time the frost continued, but, now the weather is open, work has been actively resumed, and I do not hear of any exceptional distress. The public authorities did nothing in the matter. No doubt private charity assisted families in distress, but this was done privately and unsystematically. No record of any numbers relieved has been kept or is obtainable. No unemployed register was maintained. I am sorry I cannot make any suggestions as to relieving such distress.

AUDENSHAW URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 6,547. Assessable Value (1892-93), £23,983.

Letter from *T. Chorlton*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THERE was exceptional distress in the district, but not of very severe character, owing to the severe weather only.

2. This Council employed five extra men in clearing away snow and getting gravel. There was also a voluntary soup kitchen opened and provision tickets distributed after proper inquiries. The average daily number relieved at the soup kitchen was 200. The average daily number of tickets for provisions distributed was 12.

3. The severe frost having broken up, the soup kitchen closed on the 8th instant, and the distribution of tickets has ceased.

4. The distress not having been excessive, or beyond ordinary means of relief, no suggestions are offered.

BENFIELDSIDE URBAN DISTRICT (DURHAM).

Population (1891), 6,269. Assessable Value (1892-93), £13,880.

Letter from *J. Booth*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

1. THE distress was owing to the severe weather.

2. A soup kitchen was established, but I am unable to give the average daily number relieved.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. The exceptional distress has ceased.

BLAENAVON URBAN DISTRICT (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 11,452. Assessable Value (1892-93), £28,176.

Letter from *J. Phillips*, Surveyor, 23rd March 1895.

1. THERE was a little distress caused by the severe weather.

2. Relief works were opened by the public authority.

3. No unemployed register maintained.

4. The distress has ceased now the frost has gone.

BURNHAM URBAN DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 2,360. Assessable Value (1892-93), £8,090.

Letter from *R. Brice*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

WITHIN this district, distress from want of employment was of a very limited character. The Council found some employment for men out of work, by employing them to clear away snow from the roads and streets, and a committee had funds at their disposal from private subscriptions to meet all cases of need.

CHARLTON KINGS URBAN DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER).

Population (1891), 4,187. Assessable Value (1892-93), £17,583.

Letter from *R. V. Vasser-Smith*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

THE distress in this Parish of Charlton Kings from want of employment during the past winter has been very small, practically none. Some twenty-five men have asked for employment, and this has been found for them, in clearing away snow and afterwards in stone-breaking and road-making.

CLAY CROSS URBAN DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 7,727. Assessable Value (1892-93), £12,020.

Letter from *J. Stollard*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THE local industries are almost confined to the coal and iron trades, and therefore the prevalent distress has affected this district very slightly.

HIGHER BEBINGTON URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 1,421. Assessable Value (1892-93), £5,100.

Letter from *J. H. Kenion*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

THERE is no distress in this district amongst the working classes from want of employment.

MARPLE URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 4,844. Assessable Value (1892-93), £17,178.

Letter from *C. F. Johnson*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

DURING the week ended the 16th February there was but slight distress in this district, and being of a very temporary character it was immediately met by private benefaction.

There was no necessity to keep an unemployed register.

The distress is now gone.

MONK BRETTON URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,426. Assessable Value (1892-93), £14,062.

Letter from *G. W. Atkinson*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE was no distress of the kind referred to in the district of this Council.

MYTHOLMROYD URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 4,388. Assessable Value (1892-93), £14,052.

Letter from *J. Ashton*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

THERE is no distress of any amount in this district from want of employment.

NEWBOLD AND DUNSTON URBAN DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 5,192. Assessable Value (1892-93), £19,393.

Letter from *G. E. Carline*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

AFTER diligently making inquiries, this Urban District Council finds that distress arising from want of employment has been very slight indeed in this district, in fact there has been none calling for the intervention of the Council.

OGMORE AND GARW URBAN DISTRICT (GLAMORGAN).

Population (1891), 13,800. Assessable Value (1892-93), £54,807.

Letter from *J. B. Jenkins*, Chairman, 25th March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.

OLDBURY URBAN DISTRICT (WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 22,697. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *W. Shakespeare*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

1. THERE was no exceptional distress in the district other than that occasioned by the severe weather, which was the cause of all brickyards being closed and all out-door work stopped.

2. During the very severe weather the District Council decided to employ all persons who applied for work in cleansing and clearing the snow and ice off the streets and upon other public works, and during the week ended Saturday the 16th February the daily number employed is as follows, viz. :—

Monday,	February	11th	96
Tuesday,	„	12th	86
Wednesday,	„	13th	71
Thursday,	„	14th	47
Friday,	„	15th	—
Saturday,	„	16th	88

A relief committee was formed, consisting of the leading tradesmen of the town, and upwards of £400 collected by voluntary subscription, which was distributed over the whole of the district by means of tickets, which enabled the distressed to obtain bread, provisions, coals, &c., according to the value of the ticket given. I cannot inform you the daily number relieved through this agency.

3. An unemployed register is not maintained.

4. The Urban District Council has no suggestion to make for the purpose of relieving distress, as at present they do not consider there is any need for it.

SCHOLES URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 1,249. Assessable Value (1892-93), £2,385.

Letter from *F. Shaw*, Clerk, 23rd March 1895.

During the continuance of the recent frost many in the neighbourhood were out of employment, and some distress existed in the district which was relieved by local effort, soup and other commodities being distributed. Business in the locality is better now than then, but still there are many out of employment. The Council do not at present contemplate any works which would find work for many of these unemployed, but they propose forthwith to extend their main sewer, and it is very probable that the Council will instruct their Surveyor to do the work and acquire assistance from the ranks of the locally unemployed rather than let the work by contract.

STANLEY URBAN DISTRICT (DURHAM.)

Population (1891), 7,614. Assessable Value (1892-93), £22,007.

Letter from *J. Green*, Chairman, 25th March 1895.

1. OUR district is entirely dependent on the coal trade, but during the past five years there have been very extensive building operations, and this has drawn large numbers of men, who are entirely depending on this trade, to the district. The coal trade has been, and is, under great depression. The building trade has been entirely suspended owing to the severity of the weather, and, with the depression in the coal trade, there is not likely to be the briskness in building operations that there would have been if the coal trade had been good.

2. There has not been anything done by public authorities, but a committee was formed, who collected private subscriptions and distributed goods to those in need.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. We have had plans prepared for sewerage and outfall works (which are greatly needed) by D. Balfour, Esq., C.E., of Houghton-le-Spring, also for improvements to highways and streets, and we made application to your Board in October last for the loan of 15,000*l*. After a delay of three months, or upwards, an inquiry was granted, and took place on 3rd January of this year. There was no opposition from the ratepayers for this loan; on the contrary, everybody was quite agreed that the improvement was greatly needed. From the above date, to March 22, we had no intimation whatever from your Board, and on the latter date we were asked to make slight alterations, which will be attended to at once. Had this been done eight weeks earlier, we would have been able to give employment to a large number of men who are greatly in need of it. In a communication sent to our Council, which was read and replied to, you intimated that you were quite willing to grant money, in the shape of loans, with little or no enquiry. If you do this in reference to the plans which have already been submitted to you, and which were very complete, you would be conferring a great boon to this district, and give work to a large number of unemployed. Further, if you could hurry the granting of this loan, we would be in a better position for getting the work done.

THURMASTON URBAN DISTRICT (LEICESTER).

Population (1891), 1,681. Assessable Value (1892-93), £5,100.

Letter from *B. Lane*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

1. THERE has been exceptional distress in this district, but that was owing to the prolonged severe weather, all out-door work, while the storm lasted, being at a standstill. In the district under the jurisdiction of the Urban District Council, of which I am Chairman, there is usually a slackness of work in the hosiery trade from October to March in each year.

2. The Urban District Council was utterly unable to attempt the relief of the distress by starting work of any kind, owing to the severity of the weather, but voluntary agencies did a good deal in the way of affording relief in kind. I am unable to state the average daily number relieved in the week you mention.

3. An unemployed register has not hitherto been kept, but in the future this will be done.

4. The peculiar difficulty of this district is that the old frame-work knitters have been driven out of the market by the introduction of machinery, and many have been driven to seek out-door parochial relief, to the sacrifice of their independence and against their wills.

I am afraid that, so far as this particular district is concerned, the difficulty of making suggestions to meet our case is very great. I may say, however, that it is proposed shortly to acquire some ten or fifteen acres of land for the purpose of allotments, and the laying out of this will provide some work for the older hosiery hands. In the near future, probably, other works may be undertaken by the Council. But the difficulty is greatest in the winter, and then, I think, there should be some means of temporarily relieving distress out of public funds without pauperising the recipients.

TOWYN URBAN DISTRICT (MERIONETH).

Population (1891), 3,301. Assessable Value (1892-93), £8,418.

Letter from *W. R. Davies*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

No exceptional distress existed in this district from want of employment. The hard weather threw out of work a considerable number of persons, but they were relieved (and their families) by private charity by means of distribution of coal, soup, bread and meat, &c. The Council are not in a position to make any recommendation on the subject of steps being taken to alleviate distress arising from want of employment.

WESTON-SUPER-MARE URBAN DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 15,864. Assessable Value (1892-93), £90,406.

Letter from *W. Smith*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

THE distress has passed with the inclement weather, and it is believed that the workers have ample employment.

WOKING URBAN DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 9,776. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———

Letter from *R. Mossop*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

1. THERE has not, so far as the Council are aware, been any exceptional distress in their district.

2. The Council have given employment to a number of men during the winter in making new roads.

3. No register is kept by the Council.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

AETHWY RURAL DISTRICT (ANGLESEY).

Population (1891), 8,831. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———

Letter from *H. Thomas*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress in the Aethwy district from want of employment.

BARNSLEY RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 10,912. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *C. J. Tyas*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

1. THERE is not, nor has there been, any exceptional distress in the district of this Council during the past winter.

2. Nothing has been done by this authority to meet the distress, as any proceedings were unnecessary, there being no distress of an exceptional character.

3. There has been no need for the keeping of a register of unemployed.

4. Any distress that may have occurred temporarily, owing to the stress of weather, has been met by private charity, and the Council have no suggestions to offer.

BASFORD RURAL DISTRICT (NOTTINGHAM AND DERBY).

Population (1891), 51,118. Rateable Value (1892-93), £296,609.

Letter from *C. J. Spencer*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

THERE was no doubt distress in this district during the time the frost continued, but now the weather is open work has been actively resumed, and I do not hear of any exceptional distress. The public authorities did nothing in the matter. No doubt private charity assisted families in distress, but this was done privately and unsystematically. No record of any numbers relieved has been kept, or is obtainable. No unemployed register was maintained.

I am sorry I cannot make any suggestions as to relieving such distress.

BUILTH RURAL DISTRICT (BRECKNOCK).

Population (1891), 4,408. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *E. Owen*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

THERE has been no scarcity of employment within the Builth Rural District, and therefore no distress from want of employment.

BUMPSTEAD RURAL DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 3,022. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *A. J. Payne*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

DURING the time of the severe frost there was a good deal of distress from want of employment in some parishes of this district, but I believe that there is very little distress in this district now, as there is a great deal of work to be done upon the land at this time of the year. Of course, if the present low prices continue, a large per-centage of the population from rural arable districts must inevitably drift to the towns.

LANCASTER RURAL DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 11,830. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *Rev. C. T. Royds*, Chairman, 25th March 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in this district. Though the work of certain trades, the building trade, for instance, and agricultural labour, to some extent, has been interfered with by the recent severe weather, there has been no necessity for special action on the part of public authorities.

2. There has been no increase in the number of applications for relief to the Lancaster Board of Guardians. The members of the Board gladly recognise the benefits derived by the poorer classes from the soup kitchen, which is always open, and supported by voluntary contributions, when we are visited by a severe frost. A quart of excellent soup and a loaf of bread is supplied at the cost of one penny, and the help thus offered is gladly accepted and greatly valued.

3. We have no unemployed register.

4. Had circumstances required it we should have opened a labour-yard, but the necessity did not arise.

LEYBURN RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 6,989. Rateable Value (1892-93), £52,877.

Letter from *R. Chapman*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

LOUGHBOROUGH RURAL DISTRICT (LEICESTER).

Population (1891), 4,622. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———

Letter from *J. Jarratt*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

OWING to the private distribution of relief by the well-to-do in the district the Council received no application for assistance, and deemed it unnecessary to undertake any exceptional works of the kind suggested.

LUNESDALE RURAL DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 7,347. Rateable Value (1892–93), £82,604.

Letter from *A. Greg*, Chairman, 25th March 1895.

WITH the exception of four able-bodied men, who became chargeable to the Union in the month of February, there has been in the Lunesdale district nothing beyond the usual lack of out-door work in winter.

NEWCASTLE EMLYN RURAL DISTRICT (CARMARTHEN).

Population (1891), 7,647. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *G. M. Williams*, Chairman, 25th March 1895.

AFTER careful investigation, I find there is no distress of any kind in this district; those in receipt of parish relief were allowed a little extra during the hard, severe weather, which, I am glad to say, is pretty well over. Farmers and others are complaining of scarcity of labour in this district, which is very high in comparison with the distressed state of agriculture.

OUNDLE RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON AND HUNTINGDON.)

Population (1891), 10,214. Rateable Value (1892–93), £77,186.

Letter from *W. Richardson*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

THE Council were of a unanimous opinion that there was no exceptional distress within their district, and under those circumstances considered it unnecessary to recommend a remedy for an evil which did not exist.

STARTFORTH RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 5,769. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Mitchell*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

THERE has been less than the usual amount of distress from want of employment.

What there has been has been thoroughly and effectually met by existing organisations: (*a*) The Poor Law authorities; (*b*) Local relief committees for the distribution of coal, flour, and meal; (*c*) The charitable organisations of churches and chapels.

The severe winter made it desirable, but not imperative, that some additional or supplementary "help" should be given, and this was done, though all admitted that in former years there had often been more need for help. What want of employment or need for help there once was has now quite passed away.

STOKESLEY RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 11,119. Rateable Value (1892–93), £86,192.

Letter from , 23rd March 1895.

1. No exceptional distress, excepting a few cases from the very severe weather.

2. Voluntary relief, such as soup kitchens, and distribution of coal and bread; average about 75, amply provided for; in some cases taken advantage of.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions; being entirely exceptional.

TICEHURST RURAL DISTRICT (EAST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 13,540. Rateable Value (1892–93), £—— —.

Letter from *G. F. Balcombe*, Clerk, 22nd March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, only such as is caused by the protracted frost, which is alleviated, to some extent, by private charity; and relief in kind, for the able-bodied persons out of employ, is granted from the workhouse stores. On the discontinuance of the frost, there will be plenty of employment of such persons at agricultural work.

WAKEFIELD RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 34,829. Rateable Value (1892–93), £204,922.

Letter from *J. E. Kaye*, Chairman, 25th March 1895.

1. THE distress in this district is very little more than is usual at this period (winter months), and the excess has been caused by the continuance of the intense frost for an unusual period.

2. Cases of distress have been relieved by voluntary agencies.

3. Not in this district.

4. The ordinary method of relief by the Guardians of the Poor is, in my opinion, generally sufficient to meet the distress, which I am glad to say has now passed away.

WELLINGTON RURAL DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 18,169. Rateable Value (1892–93), £91,619.

Letter from *J. Jones*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

IT was the general opinion of the Council that there was no exceptional distress arising from the want of employment in this district.

WHARFEDALE RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 7,551. Rateable Value (1892–93), £93,916.

Letter from *J. Exley*, Chairman, 23rd March 1895.

1. THERE has been no unexceptional distress in this district beyond such as might be expected in consequence of the severity of the winter.

2. Nothing was necessary to be done by the public authorities, the distress being fully met by voluntary agencies No account of the number relieved has been kept.

3. No register kept.

4. I have no suggestions to make for this district.

WILTON RURAL DISTRICT (WILTS).

Population (1891), 7,774. Rateable Value (1892–93), £56,252.

Letter from *J. Carpenter*, Chairman, 25th March 1895.

A UNANIMOUS opinion was expressed that no unusual number of hands had been out of employ this winter, and that consequently no extraordinary distress had occurred in this Union.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

MILE END OLD TOWN HAMLET.

Population (1891), 107,592. Rateable Value (1892–93), £377,984.

Letter from *M. Jutsum*, Vestry Clerk, 25th March 1895.

1. THERE is exceptional distress in this district, which is a good deal due to circumstances peculiar to the locality and to the severe weather.

2. Both the Vestry and Board of Guardians have taken in hand such works as they reasonably can, and a number of voluntary agencies have assisted. It is estimated that about 15,000 were relieved by voluntary agencies daily during the week named. The average number employed by the Vestry daily during the same week was 85. During times of snow as many as 566 have been engaged on one day.

3. An unemployed register has been opened up to the 13th instant: the total number of names registered was 1,171. Of those, 370 had been summoned to work, and, through the medium of the register, 89 had been employed by the Guardians and four at cemetery.

4. The Chairman has been deputed to give evidence before the Committee, if required, and he has suggestions to make on the subject matter.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Cardigan Municipal Borough (Cardigan).

Population (1891), 3,449. Rateable Value (1892-93), £11,607.

Letter from *D. M. Jones*, Town Clerk, 26th March 1895.

There was no exceptional distress in this locality owing to the late severe weather. A relief fund was, however, established, and assistance rendered in kind to several deserving poor.

New Romney Municipal Borough (Kent).

Population (1891), 1,366. Rateable Value (1892-93), £5,396.

Letter from *J. Bannan*, Town Clerk, 26th March 1895.

The distress during the recent winter has been met by private subscriptions, and at the present time employment can be obtained, and most, if not all, of the unemployed can obtain work.

Salisbury Municipal Borough (Wilts).

Population (1891), 15,533. Rateable Value (1892-93) £60,016.

Letter from *E. F. Pye-Smith*, Mayor, 26th March 1895.

1. Exceptional distress undoubtedly prevailed in Salisbury owing to the severity of the weather during the months of January and February. All out-door work, including the building trade and those trades dependent on buildings, also occupations connected with gardening, being quite at a standstill.

2. A meeting of the clergy, ministers, and representative citizens having practical knowledge of the needs of the poor was convened by me on the 13th February last, at which particulars as to the distress existing were supplied and verified by consultation with the Relieving Officers and Superintendent of police. The result was that a representative committee was formed to distribute relief where necessary. Subscription lists were opened at all the banks in my name, and the funds so voluntarily subscribed have been sufficient to meet the necessities of the case. At the same time I called a special meeting of the Town Council, at which the above arrangements were approved. The Council also ordered relief works to be put in hand, and by such means employment was provided for some 200 able-bodied men.

3. The voluntary subscriptions amounted to about 340*l.* in cash, which has been expended by giving tickets for coal, grocery, bread, and soup to those in distress. Approximately some 300 or 400 families were thus relieved weekly.

4. No suggestions to make, inasmuch as the distress has now practically ceased owing to the change in the weather. The relief works have made a heavy burden on the rates; but I am not prepared to suggest an alleviation of this.

Whitehaven Municipal Borough (Cumberland).

Population (1891), 19,236. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *T. Brown*, Town Clerk, 26th March 1895.

There has been no exceptional distress in the borough. Some considerable damage was done to fishing boats by a gale on the 22nd December last, by which several men were deprived of their means of livelihood. This, however, was met by public subscription. During the recent severe weather, by the efforts of the benevolent, a number of children of the very poor were supplied with free dinners twice a week.

With the exception of the above no necessity has arisen for establishing relief agencies.

No unemployed register is maintained.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Bromsgrove, North Urban District (Worcester).

Population (1881), 5,072. Assessable Value (1892-93), £12,319.

Letter from *E. Bigwood*, Chairman, 26th March 1895.

There is at the present time no special distress, but there is a shortness of employment, owing to the depression in the wrought-nail trade. This is, I hope, being gradually remedied by an increasing number finding employment in the cultivation of allotments and market gardening. During the late severe frost, a relief fund dealt with the worst cases of distress. It was impossible to employ any of the men out of work during the frost on the works suggested in a former Circular* received from your Board.

* *See* note * on page 87.

CHATTERIS URBAN DISTRICT (ISLE OF ELY).

Population (1891), 4,587. Assessable Value (1892-93), £12,207.

Letter from *A. Giddins*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

1. THERE was, during the recent severe weather, some exceptional distress, which was due almost entirely to the weather, and to some extent to the condition of agriculture.

2. It is believed that the steps taken here by private and voluntary agencies were sufficient to relieve all cases. The question of adopting some measure of an organised and public character was considered, and was thought to be unnecessary.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. Work is now general. About 20 men have been employed in sewerage work since the ground became sufficiently thawed to allow of its being gone on with.

CLEETHORPES-WITH-THRUNSCOE URBAN DISTRICT (PARTS OF LINDSEY).

Population (1891), 4,306. Assessable Value (1892-93), £13,417.

Letter from *B. Greaves*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

1. THERE is not any exceptional distress in this district, except what has been caused by the severe weather.

2. The District Council, as far as laid in their power, have employed as many hands as it was possible in the removal of snow and the cleansing of streets, which has caused an excessive burden on the district rate.

3. No unemployed register is or has been kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

EBBW VALE URBAN DISTRICT (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 17,034. Assessable Value (1892-93), £40,793.

Letter from *J. E. Ward*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

THIS Council has given employment to as many as possible in stone-breaking and other work required by the Council, and that relief has also been given in the district out of private subscriptions and the proceeds of a few concerts organised for this purpose.

EGREMONT URBAN DISTRICT (CUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 6,273. Assessable Value (1892-93), £45,600.

Letter from *J. Bowly*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district at the present time.

GUISBOROUGH URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 5,623. Assessable Value (1892-93), £21,877.

Letter from *W. Richardson*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district, nor is any unemployed register maintained.

HIPPERHOLME URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,309. Assessable Value (1892-93), £13,480.

Letter from *T. Brown*, Chairman, 25th March 1895.

THE distress in this district is now practically at an end, with the exception of a few aged people, who are chargeable to the Union. In this particular district the majority are out-door workers, such as quarrymen, &c., who have had an exceptionally hard time of it since Christmas; but applications for relief having been very liberally responded to, we have been able to cope with it, and to a great extent alleviate the distress thus caused by the severe weather; consequently, now that the storm has broken and allowed them to resume work, I have every confidence there will be ample work for all without further call on those who have so willingly assisted during the distress.

HUYTON-WITH-ROBY URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 4,625. Assessable Value (1892–93), £29,764.

Letter from *W. Swift*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

No distress in the district.

No unemployed register kept.

No suggestions to make.

KIRKLINGTON-CUM-UPSLAND URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, NORTH RIDING).

Population (1891), 258. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *G. Huddart*, Chairman, 26th March 1895.

1. IN this exclusively rural district there is no exceptional distress.

2. Nothing has been done by public authorities. A few private individuals have made work for the three or four men out of work.

3. No unemployed register has been kept, it being unnecessary.

4. Such extra work as has been given by private persons has been sufficient.

LEDBURY URBAN DISTRICT (HEREFORD).

Population (1891), ———. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. Garrood*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

1. THERE was some slight exceptional distress during and owing to the severe weather, but not peculiar to the locality.

2. The distress was easily met by voluntary effort and establishment of a soup kitchen. The relief during the crisis averaged 200 per day, and that would be about the number for week ended 16th February.

3. No register of unemployed kept.

4. The means adopted proved amply sufficient.

LLANTARNAM URBAN DISTRICT (MONMOUTH).

Population (1891), 4,905. Assessable Value (1892–93), £10,348.

Letter from *H. H. Haden*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

1. THERE is not what may be called exceptional distress in the neighbourhood, except what was due to the severe weather lately prevailing.

2. It has not been found necessary to do what has been done in former periods of distress, *i.e.*, the formation of a relief committee, solicitation of subscriptions, establishment of soup kitchen, &c., but in necessitous cases relief has been furnished by individual effort. The Urban Council are also providing a store of limestone on which men may be employed who make application for work.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions. It will be gathered from the foregoing, that although there is some distress prevailing, it is not of such extent as to require special means for dealing with it.

MOUNTAIN ASH URBAN DISTRICT (GLAMORGAN).

Population (1891), 17,590. Assessable Value (1892–93), £73,837.

Letter from *W. Little*, Chairman, 26th March 1895.

1. DURING the recent severe weather distress was somewhat acute, and I consider that such distress was due to the extraordinary severity of the winter, which prevented masons and masons' labourers, and other out-door workmen connected with the building trade, from following their usual regular employment.

2. On the 25th February, the Urban District Council of Mountain Ash instructed their Surveyor to find work for the unemployed at a plot of ground which the Council intend laying out as a public park. The number so employed by the Urban District Council was 31 during the two weeks ended 8th March 1895, and the number of days worked during the same period was 96 at the recreation ground, while the Council also found employment for the same men on the highways and at their gas and water works; and the above unemployed worked 62½ days on these concerns, making 158½ days worked by these men during the fortnight ended 8th March 1895. The amount of wages paid during the same period was about 23*l.* 15*s.* The townspeople of Mountain Ash established a fund for the relief of the unemployed and their families, and the amount raised was 75*l.*, besides many useful contributions in kind. The total number relieved by this voluntary agency on the 22nd February was 220, which would about represent the number relieved each day from the 13th February to the 2nd March, when the weather broke up and enabled men to follow their usual employment.

3. No

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. I have no other suggestions to make for relieving such distress as was recently experienced, excepting those which were adopted.

I beg further to point out that the population of the Mountain Ash District is about 20,000, and that the population is generally a mining population, and that work at the collieries has been exceedingly regular.

PENISTONE URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 2,553. Assessable Value (1892–93), £9,524.

Letter from *C. Hodgkinson*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

THIS Council did not consider it necessary to do anything towards meeting the distress out of the rates, the same being of a temporary character only, chiefly owing to the severe weather.

PENMAENMAWR URBAN DISTRICT (CARNARVON).

Population (1891), 2,710. Assessable Value (1892–93), £12,849.

Letter from *C. H. Darbishire*, Chairman, 26th March 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district.

2. Nothing is being done by the public authorities, and only the usual Christmas charities are being dispensed voluntarily.

3. No unemployed register is being maintained.

4. I have no suggestions to make for relieving the small amount of distress that there is. It is, as a rule, due to improvidence; at the two large quarries for road stone here the wages are very good and have been so for some years, and the men live quite up to what they earn, and very many have not very much idea of the benefit of thriftiness.

QUORNDON URBAN DISTRICT (LEICESTER).

Population (1891), 1,888. Assessable Value (1892–93), £5,160.

Letter from *G. White*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

THE distress from want of employment in this neighbourhood was not very exceptional, and was dealt with by a committee of ladies and gentlemen, who administered a fund voluntarily contributed by the public.

ROTHWELL URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 3,378. Assessable Value (1892–93), £7,118.

Letter from *S. Barlow*, Chairman, 26th March 1895.

THERE has been no serious distress in this district through want of employment. Last year the Local Board carried out a sewerage scheme in the town, and provision was made for laying-out, sub-draining, and levelling a small sewage farm. My Board left this part of the work over for the winter, and during the late severe frost has employed most of the unemployed thereon. In consequence of the extraordinary severity of the weather the cost of levelling was increased, but the Board felt it to be their duty to proceed with the works under disadvantage rather than throw the men out of work. We find on completion that the cost has only exceeded the Surveyor's estimate by about 15 per cent.

SMETHWICK URBAN DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 36,170. Assessable Value (1892–93), £108,266.

Letter from *W. Shakespeare*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

1. THERE was exceptional distress in Smethwick between January and March. This arose from the severe weather. It existed amongst bricklayers, navvies, and the class of men whose employment could not be carried on during the severe weather.

2. The distress was met by subscriptions amongst the inhabitants, who distributed soup and tickets upon tradesmen for provisions for the various families.

3. The local authority employed men to work upon the roads, and paid them wages varying from 2*s.* to 3*s.* per day each. The following list will show the number of men employed each week and the wages paid:—

		£	*s.*	*d.*
Week ended January 10,	21 men	10	4	8
„ January 17,	49 „	26	1	8
„ January 31,	49 „	11	19	4
„ February 7,	48 „	34	10	10
„ February 14,	67 „	34	6	4
„ February 21,	67 „	31	14	4
„ February 28,	49 „	22	4	6
„ March 7,	11 „	6	10	0
		£177	11	8

I cannot suggest any better means of relieving the distress than those before mentioned.

WEST BRIDGFORD URBAN DISTRICT (NOTTINGHAM).

Population (1891), 2,502. Assessable Value (1892–93), £12,899.

Letter from *A. T. Ashwell*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

THERE is no distress in West Bridgford, and therefore no unemployed.

WORKSOP URBAN DISTRICT (NOTTINGHAM).

Population (1891), 12,734. Assessable Value (1892–93), £43,154.

Letter from *J. Appleton*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

THERE has been very little distress from want of employment in the Council's district, but on the 25th day of February last the Council commenced working their quarry at Haggonfield, for the purpose of giving employment to persons in distress from want of work; and the Council expended the sum of 9*l.* 6*s.* 5*d.* in such relief works, and stopped them when the frost broke up, and the workmen employed were thus enabled to return to their ordinary avocations.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

ABINGDON RURAL DISTRICT (BERKS).

Population (1891), 9,279. Rateable Value (1892–93), £ ——.

Letter from *B. Challenor*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district which calls for any interference on the part of the District Council.

BRACKLEY RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), 7,779. Rateable Value (1892–93), £ ——.

Letter from *C. B. Barnes*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

THERE is no distress from want of employment known to the members of the Rural District Council; on the contrary, there is plenty of work for those who want it, and if anyone is out of employment it is entirely through his own laziness or bad character.

CROWLAND RURAL DISTRICT (PARTS OF HOLLAND).

Population (1891), 2,800. Rateable Value (1892–93), £——

Letter from *W. Pettit*, Deputy Clerk, 26th March 1895.

THERE is no abnormal distress in this district.

DOLGELLEY RURAL DISTRICT (MERIONETH).

Population (1891), 9,859. Rateable Value (1892–93), £51,544.

Letter from *M. Roberts*, Chairman, 26th March 1895.

1. THE District Council are not aware of any exceptional distress, except what is always met with when the hard weather interferes with out-door employment.

2. The distress has been met by contributions from private persons, enabling a relief committee to distribute soup, bread, meat, coal, blankets, &c., but I have no information as to the number actually relieved throughout the district during the week ended 16th February.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The Council are unable to make any suggestions for the purpose of relieving distress arising from severe weather.

ETON RURAL DISTRICT (BUCKINGHAM).

Population (1891), 21,206. Rateable Value (1892–93), £159,606.

Letter from *R. H. Barrett*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

THERE has not been any such distress from want of employment as could not be properly dealt with by ordinary Poor Law relief.

FOREHOE RURAL DISTRICT (NORFOLK).

Population (1891), 11,988. Rateable Value (1892–93), £67,174.

Letter from *G. Plumstead*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

ALTHOUGH a great many persons (principally labourers) have been out of work, and consequently a larger number of applications have been made for relief, yet the distress has not been of that character or extent to call for exceptional treatment. In most parishes voluntary efforts have been made to alleviate the distress, and the Council have increased the out-relief to all paupers over 60 years of age by 6*d.* per week.

The Council do not keep a register of the unemployed, and they have no suggestions to offer with reference to the exceptional distress existing in other localities.

LONG ASHTON RURAL DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891), 24,035. Rateable Value (1892–93), £171,948.

Letter from *H. O. B. O'Donoghue*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

1. THE exceptional distress in the district was at the time severe from the frost, but is slight from works being closed in Bedminster.

2. The distress was mainly met by voluntary agencies, and work provided by the Bristol Sanitary Authority.

3. No unemployed register has yet been opened, but a committee is considering the subject, and has passed a resolution that it is desirable to establish one.

4. There are no suggestions.

MELBOURN RURAL DISTRICT (CAMBRIDGE AND ESSEX.)

Population (1891), 11,465. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *W. J. Clark*, Chairman, 26th March 1895.

WE have no distress from want of employment in this district.

NEWENT RURAL DISTRICT (GLOUCESTER AND WORCESTER).

Population (1891), 10,048. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———

Letter from *C. Tunnicliff*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

ANY exceptional distress occasioned by the severe weather was adequately dealt with by the Guardians of the Newent Union, several able-bodied cases and their families being relieved, subject to the sanction of your Board, which has since been obtained. A soup-kitchen, started by public subscription together with well directed efforts in the same direction by private residents of the neighbourhood, formed two very important factors in the alleviation of the distress referred to. I have however, no means of ascertaining the actual number of persons relieved in this manner.

No register of unemployed was maintained, and the distress in this neighbourhood has now resumed its normal condition.

PETERBOROUGH RURAL DISTRICT (SOKE OF PETERBOROUGH).

Population (1891), 7,948. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *W. Pettit*, Deputy Clerk, 26th March 1895.

THERE is no abnormal distress in this district.

PLYMPTON ST. MARY RURAL DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 21,888. Rateable Value (1892-93), £135,632.

Letter from *F. W. Cleverton*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

IN this Union very little distress arose from want of employment, and every case of the kind was immediately met by the private charity of the residents in the district.

ST. ASAPH (DENBIGH) RURAL DISTRICT (DENBIGH).

Population (1891), 7,387. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *C. Grimsley*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

As there is no exceptional distress in this district, the Council have not considered it necessary to take any steps in the matter.

ST. ASAPH (FLINT) RURAL DISTRICT (FLINT).

Population (1891), 7,016. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *C. Grimsley*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

As there is no exceptional distress in this district, the Council have not considered it necessary to take any steps in the matter.

ST. GERMANS RURAL DISTRICT (CORNWALL).

Population (1891), 15,089. Rateable Value (1892-93), £67,254.

Letter from *F. W. Cleverton*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

VERY little distress arose in this Union from want of employment, and every case of the kind was immediately met by the private charity of the residents in the district.

STILTON RURAL DISTRICT (HUNTINGDON).

Population (1891) 7,555. Rateable Value (1892-93) £———.

Letter from *W. Pettit*, Deputy Clerk, 26th March 1895.

THERE is no abnormal distress in this district.

WHITEHAVEN RURAL DISTRICT (CUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 13,758. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *W. H. Atkinson*, Clerk, 25th March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in the district at the present time. The applications for out-door relief to the Board of Guardians are not more numerous than they were 12 months ago.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

Grange Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 1,733. Assessable Value (1892-93), £11,986.

Letter from *S. H. Jackson*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

There is now no such distress, and no register of any such cases has been kept.

Ludgvan Urban District (Cornwall).

Population (1891), 2,334. Assessable Value (1892-93), £3,292.

Letter from *R. Edwards*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

The unemployed in this district are very few, owing to employment given by market gardeners in the spring of the year.

Milton-next-Sittingbourne Urban District (Kent).

Population (1891), 5,213. Assessable Value (1892-93), £14,175.

Letter from *W. Parham*, Clerk, 27th March 1895.

The Council have no suggestions to make. They are of opinion that in many, if not all, largely populated districts work can be found of the kind mentioned in the former Circular Letter,* whereby relief can be afforded to the deserving. This has been done here on this and on former occasions.

Upholland Urban District (Lancaster).

Population (1891), 4,443. Assessable Value (1892-93), £12,012.

Letter from *J. Bassnett*, Clerk, 27th March 1895.

There has been no distress from want of employment in this district during the winter.

Weybridge Urban District (Surrey).

Population (1891), 3,944. Assessable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *G. Wheeler*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

There is no exceptional distress in this Urban District.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

Ashwell Rural District (Hertford).

Population (1891), 6,092. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. E. Phillips*, Chairman, 27th March 1895.

I do not think there has been any exceptional distress from want of employment in the parishes comprised in the Ashwell District Council.

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* *See* note * on page 87.

BRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 11,544. Rateable Value (1892–93), £81,161.

Letter from *F. S. Cloke*, Acting Clerk, 27th March 1895.

THERE has not been, during the past winter, any exceptional distress from want of employment in this district.

GRIMSBY RURAL DISTRICT (PARTS OF LINDSEY).

Population (1891), 5,509. Rateable Value (1892–93), £63,677.

Letter from *J. Wintringham*, Clerk, 27th March 1895.

THERE has not been reported to the District Council any case of exceptional distress. The district mostly affected has been the town and neighbourhood of Grimsby, but the Corporation of that borough adopted every means in their power to alleviate such distress, as your Honourable Board will doubtless have gathered from a letter received from my partner the Town Clerk, dated the 20th ultimo.

HENLEY RURAL DISTRICT (OXFORD).

Population (1891), 9,589. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *G. E. Brakspear*, Chairman, 27th March 1895.

IN the opinion of the District Council there has not been more than the usual distress in the district occasioned by a severe winter. The Council have not therefore thought it necessary to take any exceptional steps for relief.

HEXHAM RURAL DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 27,001. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. H. Nicholson*, Clerk, 27th March 1895.

1. ANY exceptional distress in this district was due to the severity of the weather.

2. The Urban District Council provided stone-breaking for the unemployed. Nothing else was done or considered necessary by any public authority. I am not in a position to give the average daily number relieved during the week ended Saturday the 16th February. So far as relates to the Hexham Urban Council's stone yard, these particulars will, no doubt, be given on their return.

3. No unemployed register is kept.

4. I have no suggestions to make for the purpose of relieving distress in this district, as it appears to be fairly met by the work of the Urban District Council and by private charity and voluntary agencies.

LLANDILOFAWR RURAL DISTRICT (CARMARTHEN).

Population (1891), 18,769. Rateable Value (1892–93), £84,964.

Letter from *R. Shipley Lewis*, Clerk, 27th March 1895.

No action has been taken during the past winter by this Rural District Council with regard to the relief of the unemployed, as there has been no exceptional distress in their district from want of employment.

MARKET HARBOROUGH RURAL DISTRICT (LEICESTER).

Population (1891), 6,822. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *C. Burgoine*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

I BELIEVE I am right in stating that the following letter covers the ground under review :—

"Sir,—In reply to your letter of yesterday (15th February) I beg to reply :—

"1. Is destitution very prevalent now among the able-bodied in your Union owing to want of work? No, I do not think so, but there may be cases unknown to me.

"2. Have any exceptional measures been instituted by the Guardians such as a labour test with a view to affording relief in such cases? Not at present, but the subject will come up on Friday, when the Circular [c] of the 11th will be read from the Local Government Board.

"3. Can

* See note * on page 87.

"3. Can you mention any difficulties lately experienced in conforming with the Poor Law Regulations in dealing with such applications? No. If we have any applicants (none at present) I shall advise relief on loan.

"4. Are Funds being raised by public or private charity for meeting the distress, and in what shape is relief being given from them? I was told on Wednesday that in the villages the labourers are still at work, but that the blast affected the bricklayers, &c. In the town there are some soup kitchens. Coal has been given away, and I should say some 20 men get a few pence putting on skates. There has, too, been one or two ice carnivals for the poor."

Yours, &c.,

To H. Stevens, Esq., Local Government Board Inspector. (signed) *C. Burgoine.*

In regard to finding employment as suggested, that was quite impossible, even if we had the means of doing so, which we have not.

NORTON RURAL DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 8,044. Rateable Value (1892–93)), £32,231.

Letter from *W. A. Milner*, Chairman, 27th March 1895.

1. EXCEPTIONAL distress has existed within the district of this Council owing to the severity of the weather.

2. The Guardians of the Union have been able to meet the exceptional circumstances by providing for all persons unemployed who applied to them work at wood-cutting, stone-breaking, or excavating, and in only one district was a voluntary agency formed. The Council have no record of the number relieved by such agency.

3. Register not necessary within the district of this authority.

4. For this district the Guardians are fully able to cope with such exceptional circumstances.

SHAFTESBURY RURAL DISTRICT (DORSET).

Population (1891), 10,636. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *G. Parham*, Chairman, 27th March 1895.

THERE has not been any exceptional distress from want of employment within the area of the Rural District.

STAFFORD RURAL DISTRICT (STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 10,320. Rateable Value (1892–93), £128,627.

Letter from *W. Morgan*, Clerk, 27th March 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress in this district during the past winter, except for a few weeks during the severe frost, when a number of boats were ice-bound on the canal, and these few cases were met by relief from the Board of Guardians, and assistance given by people in the locality.

No unemployed register has been kept, the same not being considered necessary so far as this district is concerned.

TREGARON RURAL DISTRICT (CARDIGAN).

Population (1891), 8,613. Rateable Value (1892–93), £31,718.

Letter from *J. Lloyd*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

THE Council considered that no distress from want of employment was felt in the district, and that the class that goes under the name of unemployed that goes through the district will not work for money.

WREXHAM RURAL DISTRICT (DENBIGH, FLINT AND CHESTER).

Population (1891), 49,243. Rateable Value (1892–93), £203,397.

Letter from *T. Hughes*, Chairman, 27th March 1895.

THE question of unemployed has been before our Council on 26th February, and it was decided that inasmuch as the snow was clearing away, and the Council not being aware of great distress, the question was left to drop. As our district is nearly all agricultural—no towns, except one—there are none in want of employment at present in our district. Low prices of corn is one great drawback that farmers do not employ more labourers, and foreign competition in butter, cheese, and foreign meat, and excessive railway rates on home produce.

I.—METROPOLIS.—VESTRIES AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

Lambeth Parish.

Population (1891), 275,203. Rateable Value (1892–93), £1,546,023.

Letter from *H. J. Smith*, Clerk, 28th March 1895.

The details of whether there is in the parish more or less distress than usual is a question that the Guardians are far more able to give correct information on than the Vestry. As to your questions, so far as the Vestry can give replies to the questions in your letter, I beg to state as follows:—

1. We have not found this year more exceptional distress than has been usual during the last few years, except during the time of the severe frost.

2. During the frost the Vestry put on a very large number of the unemployed to sweep the snow and cart the same away, giving in each week a change of men, so that no man had work for more than three days, and a preference was given to married men with families. In the week ended the 16th February the snow was abating and had been mainly removed; the daily average of men had by that time fallen to about 50.

3. An unemployed register was open through the month of February, and large numbers of men entered.

4. The general feeling, as I understand, of the Vestry, is, that the question of the unemployed is not for each parish separately to deal with, but for the Government to consider the subject as a whole; the effect of any parish providing an excess of work only tends to have the unemployed from the adjoining parishes flock into the favoured parish.

St. Margaret and St. John, Westminster Parish.

Population (1891), 55,539. Rateable Value (1892–93), £777,752.

Letter from *T. Horn*, Chairman, 26th March 1895.

1. There is no exceptional distress in the parish at the present time, and such distress as there was a month ago was almost entirely due to the severe weather.

2. So long as the snow rendered such a course necessary, as many extra men as possible were added to the street-cleansing service. This work ceased, however, before the week to which reference is made in the inquiry.

3. No register of unemployed is, so far as the Vestry is concerned, maintained in the parish. A register was opened by the Vestry during the twelve months ended March 1894, by way of experiment; but it was found that employers were, as a rule, able to obtain all the hands they required without reference to the register, and the trial was abandoned. The number of persons registered in the twelve months was 1,754, and of those who obtained work, 63.

4. There is nothing in any of the Acts conferring powers on Metropolitan Vestries which would enable them to make work simply for the purpose of affording relief in times of distress. I am unable, therefore, to offer any suggestion as to the relief of distress by the Vestry. It will be borne in mind, I have no doubt, that the result of any isolated effort on the part of any particular parish would almost inevitably be to attract large numbers of "unemployed" from the surrounding districts, so that the evil within the locality would thereby be rather intensified than relieved; and even the simultaneous co-operation among the local authorities in the Metropolis would probably draw an enormous immigration of unemployed from the provinces. As the result of close observation, extending over many years, I am sorry to be forced to the conclusion that, so far as the local authorities in London are concerned, the suggestions contained in the Circular of the Local Government Board, dated 30th September 1893, the substance of which was re-issued recently, are not capable of practical application.

II.—COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Plymouth County Borough.

Population (1891), 84,248. Rateable Value (1892–93), £301,412.

Letter from *W. Law*, Mayor, 28th March 1895.

1. There has been a considerable amount of exceptional distress in the Borough of Plymouth, due, in my opinion, entirely to the recent very severe weather. Owing to the frost, the building trades and all trades dependent upon it were stopped, and out-door works generally were brought to a standstill. In consequence of the stoppage of works which were being carried out by the Corporation themselves, or by contractors under them, about 150 men were thrown out of employment, and the fishing industry was also brought to a standstill, because the men could not proceed to sea.

2. In order to meet the distress, the Corporation found work for 1,100 extra men in cleansing streets, &c., and the contractors for the Corporation for the removal of house refuse also employed 224 extra men. I also inaugurated a relief fund, to which 1,000*l.* was subscribed; the distribution of the fund was entrusted to representative ward committees. Other agencies, such as soup kitchens, and the various charity organisations connected with religious bodies, relieved many, in addition to those relieved by the ward committees. The number of persons relieved by the ward committees for the week ended 16th February was upwards of 2,000.

3. An

3. An unemployed register is maintained by the Corporation, and has been for upwards of a year; it has worked well, and has enabled us to ascertain the extent of the distress due to want of employment.

4. In my judgment, the distress being due entirely to the severe weather, I have no suggestion to make for its relief. I would, however, add that the Corporation of Plymouth, as far as practicable, endeavour to arrange for works to be proceeded with in the winter months when employment is scarce, and would have been able to employ more men during January and February if they had obtained the sanction of the Local Government Board to the purchase of the land required for housing the working classes at an earlier date. The Corporation think that there is very great delay in obtaining the Board's sanction to borrowing powers for works which they are authorised to carry out under the Public Health Act, 1875, and other Acts of Parliament. This has, not only this year but in previous years, prevented them employing so many men as they desired.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Chipping Wycombe Municipal Borough (Buckingham).

Population (1891), 13,435. Rateable Value (1892–93), £37,738.

Letter from *D. Clarke*, Town Clerk, 28th March 1895.

1. There is not any exceptional distress in this borough other than that which resulted from the exceptionally severe weather.

2. No register of the unemployed is kept in this borough.

3. I am unable to make any useful suggestions with reference to the matters referred to in the circulars.

Congleton Municipal Borough (Chester).

Population (1891), 10,744. Rateable Value (1892-93), £30,380.

Letter from *A. S. Sheldon*, Town Clerk, 28th March 1895.

1. There was exceptional distress in the district of this borough owing to the severe weather. Men who earn their livings by out-door work were thrown out of employment, thus occasioning distress.

2. In consequence of the letter from your Board, dated the 11th ultimo, recommending the establishment of relief works for the unemployed, the sewering and making of two old streets in the borough was ordered to be proceeded with at once, and in this way work was provided for about 90 persons of the class referred to. You will find the details of the action of the Corporation of this borough in my letter* to your Board of the 19th ultimo, to which at present no answer has been returned. Food and clothing were distributed to the necessitous by charitably disposed persons, and it is believed that, upon the whole, the distress in this borough was promptly and satisfactorily coped with.

3. No unemployed register was maintained, but I have in my possession the names of all persons who applied for employment on the relief works referred to.

4. I believe I am stating the views of the Corporation in saying that (*a*) at times of exceptional distress local authorities, such as Towns Councils and Boards of Guardians, should be at liberty to institute public works, that they should be enabled to borrow money therefor, and that the usual restrictions on borrowing powers should be relaxed (*b*) that ratepayers employed on relief works should not suffer any civil disability by reason of such employment.

East Retford Municipal Borough (Nottingham).

Population (1891), 10,603. Rateable Value (1892–93), £41,377.

Letter from *S. Jones*, Town Clerk, 28th March 1895.

1. During the month of February there was some exceptional distress in the district caused entirely by the frost.

2. The Mayor met this distress by calling a meeting of the inhabitants and obtaining subscriptions, which were freely given. A soup kitchen was opened daily for children, and relief was given to distressed families in the shape of bread and coal. The average number of children attending the soup kitchen was about 500. The number of families relieved was about 300.

3. No unemployed register has been maintained in this district.

4. The distress in this district was entirely owing to the weather and has passed away. At the present time there is rather an extra amount of work in progress in the district. In the agricultural districts surrounding the town, labour can scarcely be obtained.

*This letter was a reply to the Board's Circular Letter of the 11th February last (*see* note * on page 87), and stated that the Town Council intended to proceed at once with the sewering of certain streets in order to provide work for the unemployed.

NEW WINDSOR MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (BERKS).

Population (1891), 12,327. Rateable Value (1892–93), £75,413.

Letter from *G. H. Long*, Town Clerk, 28th March 1895.

1. THERE was exceptional distress for a short period, caused by Thames floods, and afterwards by the extremely severe weather, but this abnormal distress has now ceased.

2. The distress was adequately met by the Mayor's fund, and other voluntary efforts and agencies. It is not possible to give the average daily number relieved, and if given, it would be misleading, as numbers were relieved who were living in adjoining districts outside the borough.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make, the exceptional distress having ceased.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

CASTLETON-BY-ROCHDALE URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 4,857. Assessable Value (1892–93), £18,182.

Letter from *R. B. Wallis*, Clerk, 28th March 1895.

WE have no notice of any distress from want of employment within the district of the Council.

HODDESDON URBAN DISTRICT (HERTFORD).

Population (1891), ——. Assessable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *J. Campbell*, Chairman, 27th March 1895.

1. THERE was exceptional distress during the frost, due solely to the severe weather.

2. This Urban District was only formed on the 1st January, and the Council could not organise any relief. The voluntary agencies consisted of a relief society, soup-kitchen, and other benevolent organisations. It is impossible to give reliable statistics as to the number relieved.

3. There is an unemployed register kept by the relief society, but the result is not encouraging. The employers know where to find their labour.

4. A severe winter must always produce distress, because it prevents both "public" and "private" employment of labour. I can make no suggestion which would not be open to well-founded objections.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

BRADFORD RURAL DISTRICT (WILTS).

Population (1891), 5,408. Rateable Value (1892–93), £35,442.

Letter from *J. Compton*, Clerk. 28th March 1895.

No exceptional distress from want of employment has been brought to the notice of the Board of Guardians as existing within their district. The employment in the woollen cloth industry has been somewhat restricted for some time past, and no doubt has brought many families into straitened circumstances; but, up to the present, it does not appear to have been productive of any positive distress.

CUCKFIELD RURAL DISTRICT (WEST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 15,132. Rateable Value (1892–93), £——.

Letter from *E. Waugh*, Clerk, 28th March 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress throughout this district from want of employment or owing to the severe weather other than has been able to be dealt with by private sources.

No unemployed register has been kept.

EPSOM RURAL DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 18,000. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *W. O. Reader*, Clerk, 28th March 1895.

1. THE Chairman is not aware of any exceptional distress prevailing in the district.

2. Nothing has been done by the Council to alleviate distress, if any exists.

3. No unemployed register has been kept.

4. He has no suggestions to make.

HUNGERFORD RURAL DISTRICT (BERKS, WILTS, AND SOUTHAMPTON).

Population (1891), ———. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *H. D. Woodman*, Chairman, 28th March 1895.

1. IN the larger villages I do not hear of any exceptional distress, only want of employment is required; this is brought about solely by the depressed state of agriculture.

2. At Hungerford, during the bad weather, some distress arose, which was relieved at the time by voluntary agencies to the amount of some 24*l.* given in kind.

3. No register, that I am aware of, kept in any part of Hungerford Union, or, in my opinion, required.

PONTARDAWE RURAL DISTRICT (GLAMORGAN).

Population (1891), 17,374. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *T. Jones*, Chairman, 28th March 1895.

1. IN the district of Clydach there are about 400 put out of employment through the stoppage of two tin plate works, one being idle for the last nine months.

2. Nothing is done by public authorities, but there is a voluntary relief committee doing good work in the way of assisting the distressing cases, which are about 40 in number.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. No suggestions to make.

ST. ALBANS RURAL DISTRICT (HERTFORD).

Population (1891), 13,974. Rateable Value (1892-93), £89,732.

Letter from *R. W. Brabant*, Clerk, 27th March 1895.

1. THERE has been distress in this district on account of the severe weather.

2. At Harpenden voluntary relief works were commenced, and remained open six or seven weeks.

3. An unemployed register is not at present kept.

SEVENOAKS RURAL DISTRICT (KENT).

Population (1891), 22,387. Rateable Value (1892-93), £145,285.

Letter from *Rev. C. E. Few*, Chairman, 29th March 1895.

1. THERE has not been any exceptional distress in this district beyond what has been ordinarily experienced throughout the country owing to severe weather.

2. Nothing has been done to meet the distress by public authorities, but soup kitchens have been opened, and relief in coals and money provided by voluntary agencies. It is, however, impossible to state the average daily number relieved by such agencies during the week ended Saturday, the 16th day of February, in so large a district as this.

3. No unemployed registers have been maintained.

4. The Council have not any suggestions to make.

SETTLE RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 14,071. Rateable Value (1892-93), £142,770.

Letter from *C. E. Bygrave*, Clerk, 28th March 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this district.

SHIFNAL RURAL DISTRICT (SALOP AND STAFFORD).

Population (1891), 11,988. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *A. G. Phillips*, Clerk, 28th March 1895.

As regards distress from want of employment, there have been no applications for relief to this Board, nor from any parties asking to be furnished with employment. Distress that was caused by the severe weather was promptly met by private charity.

WESTHAMPNETT RURAL DISTRICT (WEST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 16,994. Rateable Value (1892–93), £92,195.

Letter from *Duke of Richmond and Gordon*, Chairman, 28th March 1895.

1. THERE is no exceptional distress in the district arising from want of employment.
2. Nothing has been done by public authorities or by voluntary agencies that I am aware of.
3. No register kept.
4. No suggestions to make; no exceptional distress.

II.—COUNTY BOROUGHS.

CARDIFF COUNTY BOROUGH.

Population (1891), 128,915. Rateable Value (1892-93), £804,630.

Letter from *J. L. Wheatley*, Town Clerk, 29th March 1895.

1. THERE has been a considerable amount of distress in the Borough owing, as far as can be ascertained, to scarcity of employment, and to very severe weather.

2. *Measures by Public Authorities.*—200 men were temporarily employed on street works and in sewer making, mostly married men; hours 8 per day; wages 5*d.* per hour; one gang (100) working three consecutive days and the other gang three consecutive days in each week; about 40 employed at stonebreaking; wages 1*s.* 4*d.* per yard; hours 7½; all wages paid daily; works will cease in a few days; all the above men were taken from the "Register." *See* No. 3. *Voluntary Agencies.*—Soon after the setting in of the late severe frost the distress seemed keener, and the Mayor (Alderman Carey, J.P.) called a town's meeting. In the result a relief fund was opened, and a Committee appointed to administer the same in each ward (10). But previous to this soup-kitchens had been opened, and bread and butter and cheese daily distributed by the Mayor. Hundreds of tons of coal were also given away by coal merchants and others. About 5,600 families were served. The average daily number of persons relieved by each agency for the week ended 16th February 1895 (excluding cases dealt with privately by the Mayor and the good done by the Waifs and Strays Society) was 13,480. 5,235 tickets (*i.e.* for provisions valued from 1*s.* to 4*s.*) were issued by the ward committees appointed at the public meeting.

3. An unemployed register was opened at the Town Hall on the 27th December 1894, and the total number of unemployed enrolled therein was 712. It was from this register that the Corporation selected men for the relief works. Each man was personally interrogated by the Committee and the utmost care exercised.

4. My Committee have no suggestions to make.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

ALFRETON URBAN DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 15,355. Assessable Value (1892–93), £36,839.

Letter from *W. W. Nelson*, Clerk, 29th March 1895.

IN this Urban District the principal occupation is coal-mining, and during the winter months the coal trade is usually rather better than at any other time of the year, and there has therefore not been so much distress from want of employment during the last few months as in many other districts. During the severe weather a few men in the building trade were thrown out of work, but not to any great extent. The District Council had under consideration the finding of employment for such men, but it was found almost impossible to get them to do the work required, or to give them such work as they would be willing to undertake.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

Knaresborough Rural District (York, West Riding).

Population (1891), 8,592. Rateable Value (1892–93), £83,035.

Letter from *J. Smith*, Clerk, 29th March 1895.

The Council at their meeting on the 13th ultimo passed the following resolution on the subject of distress from want of employment :—

"That the Council was of opinion that this district was not at the present time seriously affected in this respect, and that in consequence thereof, no action was necessary to be taken."

Romford Rural District (Essex).

Population (1891), 16,066. Rateable Value (1892–93), £97,254.

Letter from *W. Smith*, Clerk, 27th March 1895.

In this Council's district there has been but a small increase in the distress usually occurring during a continuance of frosty weather, compared with that of previous years. In order to put a stop to imposition, voluntary committees were formed, and in a few necessitous cases relief was given.

An unemployed register has not been kept.

The Guardians offered employment by breaking stone, and this was for a short period patronised by a few persons.

Skirlaugh Rural District (York, East Riding).

Population (1891), 7,291. Rateable Value (1892–93), £64,765.

Letter from *C. W. Hobson*, Clerk, 29th March 1895.

There has been no exceptional amount of distress in the Union, which is a purely agricultural one, during the past winter, and there has consequently been no occasion for any special steps being taken to deal therewith, such as opening labour yards, &c.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

Blandford Municipal Borough (Dorset).

Population (1891), 3,974. Rateable Value (1892–93), £13,627.

Letter from *C. H. Curtis*, Mayor, 28th March 1895.

1. There has been exceptional distress here, owing to severity of weather, but many men have now resumed work. With exception of those employed by farmers, we have not many labourers of this kind living in the town.

2. In order to employ more men our Town Council has been removing shingle and gravel (that has silted up from the floods) from the River Stour, and cracking same for use on our main roads. I also started a public subscription, and have for some weeks been delivering soup, bread, rice, and coal, to the deserving poor at a very nominal charge, as from experience we find they are quite eager to pay a trifle, and prefer to do so, rather than to receive it as charity doles. No account of numbers have been kept.

3. No register of unemployed.

4. As far as our town is concerned, if business generally turns men prosperous, we should not have much cause for complaint. Our neighbourhood is principally an agricultural one, and with more prosperous times for the farmers and landowners, we as tradesmen should be doing more business and spending money more freely. We have a number of charities in Blandford, and this of course is a great boon, but there are a number of men here who prefer to live by cadging rather than do a day's work even when it is offered them, and these may style themselves unemployed.

Llanidloes Municipal Borough (Montgomery).

Population (1891), 2,574. Rateable Value (1892–93), £6,540.

Letter from *D. Davies*, Mayor, 28th March 1895.

There has not been exceptional distress in this town and district this winter, except that occasioned by the severe weather, which has not at any time been of a serious nature.

The population of our town being a little under 3,000.

MORLEY MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 21,068. Rateable Value (1892–93), £71,933.

Letter from *R. B. Hopkins*, Town Clerk, 28th March 1895.

1. THE Mayor does not consider that there is any exceptional distress in this borough. During the last prolonged severe frost there was undoubtedly exceptional distress, owing to the scarcity of out-door work. There are in this borough a large number of stone quarries employing many workpeople. Work at these was practically stopped for several weeks, and consequently severe distress resulted.

2. The distress has been relieved in this borough by means of voluntary subscriptions to a special distress fund which was started under the management of a thoroughly representative committee. The total sum of 384*l.* was contributed to this fund, and of this 185*l.* was actually distributed, leaving the sum of 200*l.* available for any further cases of exceptional cases of distress. No daily relief was given and no money was distributed. Relief was given weekly in the shape of orders on various tradespeople in the town for provisions. The rate at which relief was given was substantially as follows. Applicants received relief to various amounts according to the number of family; the amounts per week being usually fixed at 3*s.* for each parent and 1*s.* 6*d.* for each child in the family. During the week ended Saturday, February 16th last, 211 relief tickets were issued; probably each ticket would represent three people.

3. No public employment register has been opened, but the unemployed in the borough took a room where they themselves maintained a register. I do not think that this register had any very practicable result except for the means of administering relief. At present I do not think there is any considerable number of unemployed in the borough although of course a large number of persons employed in the collieries are only working about three days per week.

4. The Mayor is at present from home, and I am not able to say whether he would wish to make any such suggestions. If I might add one of my own it would be that provision should be made for much greater elasticity in the administration of poor law relief on occasions like this, both as to the amount granted and the speed with which relief could be given. I also think that relief given under these circumstances should not disfranchise the recipient. As an instance of what I have given in this borough, containing over 22,000 people, the Relieving Officer resides some miles away at the neighbouring borough of Batley, and as a rule only comes to Morley once a week.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

FINCHLEY URBAN DISTRICT (MIDDLESEX).

Population (1891), 16,647. Assessable Value (1892–93), £83,117.

Letter from *F. Goodyear*, Chairman, 29th March 1895.

1. THERE has been distress in the district, owing principally to the unusually severe winter, which has thrown a large number of gardeners, builders, labourers, and jobbing men generally, out of employment.

2. To meet the distress, the Urban District Council for several weeks instructed their Surveyor to employ as many extra men as he could usefully find work for, in clearing the roads and footways, and in spreading sand in slippery places. The amount of money spent in this manner was about 80*l.*, spread over a period of eight weeks. The Council having a large staff of men employed regularly upon the roads, it was undesirable to largely increase the number of men. Of the number who have applied for work, and who have had it offered to them, about 12 per cent. do not present themselves at the time appointed. A number of the men consider the money paid for ordinary scavenging, viz., 4*d.* an hour, too small a remuneration and refuse to accept it. The Guardians of Barnet Union, in which this parish is included, opened a labour yard. This was taken advantage of, and many men have expressed satisfaction with the opportunity of work; on the other hand, some raised objection on account of its being poor law relief, and entailing disfranchisement. Voluntary Agencies.—In the district the usual church and chapel agencies have shown an active sympathy with the wants of the people, and a fair amount of relief has been afforded by these means; for instance, I am informed that the Rev. A. B. Middleditch, the minister of a Baptist chapel, has relieved many cases, and for some weeks he has caused a schoolroom to be opened from 9.30 a.m., to 5.30 p.m., and fires kept up for the use of persons out of work. Arrangements were made for the distribution of soup tickets at the board schools, and where necessary, at the other public elementary schools in the district. Over and above all, other disconnected and private agencies, the Finchley Charity Organisation Society, a public institution supported by a large number of influential residents, irrespective of political or religious opinion. This society appointed special relief committees in each sub division of the district to meet (sometimes daily), according to the requirements of the immediate locality. The society is in a position to relieve all urgent cases unless it is known they are otherwise provided for. As an instance of the position that this society holds in the district, at a public meeting held for the purpose of raising a special emergency fund, presided over by Mr. H. C. Stephens, M.P. for the Parliamentary Division, the appeal was freely responded to, and in the result a sum of about 300*l.* was placed at the disposal of the Organisation Society, which enabled to meet all the demands of the district committees.

3. An unemployed register is kept.

4. I consider that the distress has been fairly met by the various means existing within the district. I would personally suggest that the receipt of poor law relief should not entail disfranchisement, which appears to be a grievance in the opinion of a large number of the poorer classes; but whether an alteration of the law in this respect would cause more persons to seek help from the Unions is a question I cannot satisfy myself upon. The feeling however exists, and I consider it within the proper scope of my answer to your circular to raise the question.

SOUTH BLYTH URBAN DISTRICT (NORTHUMBERLAND).

Population (1891), 3,728. Assessable Value (1892–93), £15,442.

Letter from *S. K. Young*, Chairman, 29th March 1895.

1. WE have had some distress in our district, entirely owing to the severe weather.

2. The public authorities did not feel called upon to meet the temporary distress, as voluntary agencies coped well with it.

3. Some trade societies keep a register, but no general one is kept.

4. No special suggestions to make, except that the extreme measures taken by trade unions does much to hamper trade. Also that co-operation is lessening the demand for labour.

SWADLINCOTE DISTRICT URBAN DISTRICT (DERBY).

Population (1891), 13,889. Assessable Value (1892–93), £12,159.

Letter from *W. A. Musson*, Clerk, 30th March 1895.

A SPECIAL committee was formed to consider the question of the unemployed in this district, and they reported that there was no widespread distress from want of employment beyond what the late frost had caused, but that there were some 20 or 30 men unable from different causes to find employment, and the Council have taken steps to provide them with work on some new streets and in other ways.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

HAWARDEN RURAL DISTRICT (FLINT).

Population (1891), 15,802. Rateable Value (1892–93), £93,251.

Letter from *J. Roberts*, Chairman, 28th March 1895.

MY district started East end Saltney, including the Anchor Works, which are a slack trade, and has been for some time. Along the south side of the River Dee, Proctor and Ryland's Manure Works about doubled this and last year Dee Oil Works doing more than they have done for years; there is also Knacker's Works; as usual, Taylor's engineers' trade fairly well; the two railway companies, London and North Western, and the Great Western, constant employment for a large number of men. All the farms each side of the river Dee, including Sealand, Saltney, Hawarden, and other small townships in Hawarden Union, all occupied and keep regularly the usual number of hands. I pay about 1,100*l.* wages on my farms, or from 16*s.* to 21*s.* per week each man, as against 10*s.* per week in 1837, the first winter I came here.

The Duke of Westminster, Mr. Gladstone, and others, employ a large number of men regularly. There have not been more than usual of unemployed here, and those are men that do not settle, excepting tradesmen stopped by the frost, as usual.

Joining on the other part of the Hawarden Union, west from here, Quay, Aston, Buckley, on to Coed Falon, including collieries, brick works, chemistry works, oil works; and there has been distress, not I believe for want of employment, but because the labourer will not take his part by taking less wages, so that the employer can work their works without a loss. There is a large colliery now going to stop because the men will not take less money, although, as I can show, wages have doubled in my case between 1857 and about 1877; and by now all they have to buy is one-third less. Wheat is now only 3*s.* 3*d.* per 75 lbs.; the above dates it seldom came under 8*s.* per 75 lbs. It is quite plain to my mind that it is the labourers are ruining this country. They have had it in the time of prosperity; why not assist us, the employers, and take their part in this great trial we are going through. The Clerk of the Hawarden Union has been here, and says he sent your communication to me to Mr. Musprat, Chairman of County Council. He tells me Mr. Musprat, when he came to London to give evidence, his voice broke down. If I can say any more of my experience I will be glad. In this morning's paper I have particulars of the case I hinted at in this letter, which I enclose, to prove beyond doubt to me that the labourers of this country are bringing it to ruin; the trade is leaving us; if I pay 1*s.* to a man and only receive 6*d.* value, it is only a question of time.

(Newspaper Extract above referred to).

Stoppage of the Colliery.—Explanation of the Director.—Alleged Gross Misstatements.—Our attention has been called to certain alleged misstatements concerning the wages of the colliers, many of whom are now unemployed, of the Red Pits Colliery, and other circumstances connected therewith, by Mr. Dawes, the managing director of the colliery. Mr. Dawes, after pointing out that the cause of the stoppage of many of the collieries had been the difficulty of finding a proper market for their coal, which, at best, was only inferior coals, stated that about a month ago on the previous Saturday he received the offer from Birkenhead to deliver 5,000 tons of coal a month for six months. As he knew that the owners of the colliery were anxious to keep the pit open, and if possible to get all the men back to work, he considered the offer, but found that to accept it, even without leaving any profit to the owners of the colliery, there would have to be a reduction in the colliers' wages of 30 per cent., or a return to the rate of pay of 1888. This offer he made to the colliers on the Saturday referred to, but as already published, they declined to accept the proposed terms. Even had they accepted, says Mr. Dawes, it was a difficult question whether he could have cleared ends over the contract. They should always have a margin of 5 per cent. in case of any mishap, or to meet incidental expenses. According to the offer made to the men there was no margin left. But, Mr. Dawes says, he took upon himself to make the offer. To have taken the contract, and paid the men at the present rate of wages, would have entailed a loss of 344*l.* per week. If the men had accepted the terms offered, Mr. Dawes would have closed with the contract, and the men would have had work for six months certain, and at the end of that time things might have taken a turn that would have given employment to the men. But what was the rate of wages in 1888? Mr. Dawes goes to his pay book, and he finds that on 4th February 1888, Mr. David

Griffiths, who was chairman at the colliery meeting in the King's Head, and his partner, Edward Jones, were actually receiving 4*s.* 3*d.* a day each, after the deductions for the cost of powder, and tool sharpening, etc., had been made. On 21st January 1888, Edward Jones, William Jones, Isaac Parry, and Pierce Hughes, were actually receiving 3*s.* 10*d.* each per day of the preceding fortnight, or 4*s.* 3*d.* including the usual deductions. The average wage per day during 1888 paid to colliers was 3*s.* 11¼*d.*; to the bye-men, or those for keeping the rails in order, 3*s.* 5¼*d.* and boys, 2*s.* 7*d.* At the present time the colliers now working have an increase of 30 per cent. on these rates; and it was a return to these wages that the colliers have now declined. Mr. Dawes regrets that they have declined it, and adds that the men could have worked overtime if they choosed, and could have made fair wages, and that "the place would be right enough if the agitators would leave them alone." In consequence of the action of the men, and the losing of the contract, Mr. Dawes says he is compelled to close the pit entirely, and is to give a fortnight's notice to all the men next Saturday to work out their time. Our readers will now see that the statement at the miners' meeting already reported, that the colliers were receiving from 21*s.* to 22*s.* a week, and were asked to accept a reduction of 30 per cent. on that, is misleading and incorrect. The colliers have been asked to accept the rate of wages paid in 1888, which was on an average, as seen in the books at the directors' office, 3*s.* 11¼*d.* a day, or practically 4*s.* a day, or 24*s.* a week. We deeply regret the stoppage of a local industry like the Red Pits Colliery, and the untold hardships it will bring on the many families to whose bread-winners it gave a steady employment; and we hope that before long matters will mend, and the pit be again opened.

HAY RURAL DISTRICT (BRECKNOCK).

Population (1891), 3,222. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *C. Griffiths*, Clerk, 30th March 1895.

THERE is no apparent distress in this district, and in the opinion of the Rural District Council it is unnecessary to take any steps in the matter.

MELFORD RURAL DISTRICT (WEST SUFFOLK).

Population (1891), 16,834. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *W. H. Parker*, Chairman, 28th March 1895.

DURING the unusually prolonged spell of hard weather a great many agricultural labourers and bricklayers and stonemasons, men were out of work, but I do not think there was more destitution in the district than in other winters when the weather has been unusually severe. Since milder weather set in I am of opinion that there are very few who are in want of employment, beyond the usual number of loafers. Agricultural operations being much in arrear, owing to the prolonged frost, are employing most of those who work on the land, though the extremity of depression to which the district is reduced renders all employment on the land most uncertain. The malting industry is, I believe, employing its usual numbers at this season of the year, while the horsehair weavers have as much work as they can do, and local factories are advertising for weavers. I am of opinion that whatever distress there may be is mainly owing to the ruined condition of the agricultural community, and to the unusually prolonged spell of severe weather.

PAINSCASTLE RURAL DISTRICT (RADNOR).

Population (1891), 2,529. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *Rev. T. Williams*, Chairman, 29th March 1895.

1. THERE has been no exceptional distress in this district apart from what was caused by the late severe weather. The distress caused by the latter cause was very limited and temporary, if the term "distress" is at all applicable to the case.

2. The Board of Guardians had to give, and did give, some little exceptional relief in consequence of the prolonged severe weather. In many parishes exceptional help in the form of coal, &c. was given by private individuals and agencies.

3. No unemployed register kept.

4. The existing agencies, voluntary and public, seem quite equal to the demand likely to be made upon them.

STOW UNION {EAST STOW / THEDWASTRE} RURAL DISTRICTS {(EAST SUFFOLK). / (WEST SUFFOLK).}

Population (1891) {East Stow, 6,116. / Thedwastre 9,476.} Rateable Value (1892–93), £76,604.

Letter from *R. E. Wilkes*, Clerk, 26th March 1895.

IT is difficult to answer the questions, so far as the Stow Union is concerned. We were under the impression that there was no exceptional distress in our locality, except what was caused by the severe weather; but the late weekly returns (Form A.) seem to prove otherwise. I enclose Form A., showing the actual figures for the last week and corresponding week of last year, so far as out-relief is concerned. Without doubt the correct explanation of the

the abnormal increase in the amount of relief given is the change in the policy and methods of the Board of Guardians. For many years out-relief has been given sparingly; but the new board has reversed this, and, to a very great extent, this accounts for the altered returns. At present, in my opinion, there are very few men unemployed, certainly not more than usual.

(STATEMENT as to Out-door Paupers, above referred to).

Names of Relieving Officers.	Names of Districts.	ADULTS.						Children under 16 years.	TOTAL.	AMOUNT OF RELIEF.		
		Not Able bodied.		Able-bodied. Males.		Able-bodied. Females.				In Kind.	In Money.	TOTAL.
		Males.	Females.	In Health.	Temporarily Disabled.	In Health.	Temporarily Disabled.			£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
John Frederick Roper.	Rattlesden -	55	85	-	11	12	12	48	223	4 17 10	21 5 -	26 2 10
Henry Riley - -	Stowmarket -	54	135	1	5	17	3	79	294	4 19 5	21 19 -	26 18 5
E. A. English - -	Walsham - -	52	77	-	6	9	1	31	176	3 9 6	17 6 6	20 16 -
	TOTALS - -	458		77				158	693	13 6 9	60 10 6	73 17 3
	TOTALS in corresponding Week of LAST YEAR -	360		53				140	553	15 8 8	33 18 -	49 6 8

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

EMLEY URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 1,406. Assessable Value (1892–93), £ 4,169.

Letter from *F. C. Heath*, Clerk, 2nd April 1895.

THERE is a little exceptional distress in the district. The distress is owing to the slackness of the coal trade. Nothing has been done to meet the distress.

No register is kept.

HOLLINGWORTH URBAN DISTRICT (CHESTER).

Population (1891), 2,895. Assessable Value (1892–93), £ 9,683.

Letter from *J. W. Tweedale*, Clerk, 1st April 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress in the above district.

MARSDEN URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 3,855. Assessable Value (1892–93), £ 15,095.

Letter from *J. C. Farrar*, Clerk, 29th March 1895.

PRIVATE subscriptions, &c. met the exceptional distress caused by the recent severe weather, and matters are now in their normal state.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

BRIDLINGTON RURAL DISTRICT (YORK, EAST RIDING).

Population (1891), 7,981. Rateable Value (1892–93), £ 75,940.

Letter from *C. Gray*, Clerk, 2nd April 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress within the district of this Council.

CHIRBURY RURAL DISTRICT (SALOP).

Population (1891), 4,084. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *C. S. Pryce*, Clerk, 2nd April 1895.

THERE has been no distress from want of employment in the Chirbury Rural District that has not been relieved by local efforts.

KETTON RURAL DISTRICT (RUTLAND).

Population (1891), 2,961. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *R. M. English*, Clerk, 2nd April 1895.

AT the present time there is no distress from want of employment within this district.

TISBURY RURAL DISTRICT (WILTS.)

Population (1891), 8,597. Rateable Value (1892–93), £ 56,794.

Letter from *W. Marsh*, Clerk, 29th March 1895.

THERE has been no appreciable and unusual distress from want of employment in the district of this Union.

TIVERTON RURAL DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 15,974. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *C. M. Hole*, Clerk, 1st April 1895.

THERE has been no exceptional distress in this Union. During the late severe weather, soup has been supplied in the larger parishes, as is usually done during the time of severe frost.

UFFINGTON RURAL DISTRICT (PARTS OF KESTEVEN).

Population (1891), 1,606. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *R. M. English*, Clerk, 2nd April 1895.

AT the present time there is no distress from want of employment within this district.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

CREWKERNE URBAN DISTRICT (SOMERSET).

Population (1891),——. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. W. Munden*, 3rd April 1895.

1. YES; due to the severe weather.

2. Voluntarily; a relief committee has daily distributed bread and soup, and, in some instances, groceries and coal. The average number daily relieved was 950, representing some 250 to 300 families. The relief extended over a period of 23 days.

3. No unemployed register kept

4. Only that when voluntary relief fails Government relief must be sought.

FRIMLEY URBAN DISTRICT (SURREY).

Population (1891), 5,295. Assessable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *A. Pain*, Chairman, 2nd April 1895.

As far as the Urban District of Frimley is concerned, distress from want of employment can hardly be said to exist.

HAWORTH URBAN DISTRICT (YORK, WEST RIDING).

Population (1891), 5,034. Assessable Value (1892–93), £ 9,553.

Letter from *W. Robertshaw*, Clerk, 3rd April 1895.

THERE is no distress from want of employment in the Council's district of any moment.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

BILLERICAY RURAL DISTRICT (ESSEX).

Population (1891), 20,555. Rateable Value (1892–93), £ 111,874.

Letter from *C. C. Lewis*, Clerk, 2nd April 1895.

No serious difficulty has arisen in this district in dealing with persons out of employment.

SHARDLOW RURAL DISTRICT (DERBY AND NOTTINGHAM).

Population (1891), 26,575. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. W. Newbold*, Clerk, 3rd April 1895.

THERE is little exceptional distress through want of employment in this district.

WYCOMBE RURAL DISTRICT (BUCKINGHAM).

Population (1891), 27,929. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *T. J. Reynolds*, Clerk, 3rd April 1895.

1. No exceptional distress has been officially brought to the notice of the Council.
2. Voluntary agencies have been helping the unemployed and others during the severe weather as in former winters, but to what extent is unknown to this Council.
3. No register of unemployed has been kept.
4. The Council have no suggestions to make.

IV.—URBAN DISTRICTS.

BEESTON URBAN DISTRICT (NOTTINGHAM).

Population (1891), 6,948. Assessable Value (1892–93), £19,123.

Letter from *C. Stroud*, Clerk, 6th April 1895.

1. No exceptional distress in the district.
3. No unemployed register kept.
4. No suggestions to make.

TOXTETH PARK URBAN DISTRICT (LANCASTER).

Population (1891), 21,046. Assessable Value (1892–93), £135,205.

Letter from *North*, *Kirk*, and *Cornett*, Clerks, 6th April 1895.

1. SUCH distress as prevailed was owing to the extraordinarily severe weather.

2. Some funds were voluntarily contributed, and, as a result, soup, bread, and coals were distributed to about 2,000 people.

3. It was not found necessary to open any register, but work at stone-breaking could be obtained at the District Council's yards.

4. The District Council pressed forward an application to your Board for sanction to borrow certain sums for the construction of sewerage and other works which would have given employment to the working classes. An inquiry has since been held, and the Council are now awaiting the sanction, so that the works can be proceeded with at once.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

TAVISTOCK RURAL DISTRICT (DEVON).

Population (1891), 20,960. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *J. W. Spear*, Chairman, 4th April 1895.

THERE is no exceptional distress in this Union from lack of work at the present time. During the severe weather of January and February there were a few cases; these the Guardians endeavoured to meet (and I think with fair success) by employing several men removing snow, and by directing the Relieving Officers to give discretionary relief to unemployed persons. These efforts were supplemented by private charity in providing soup, and in other ways.

III.—BOROUGHS OTHER THAN COUNTY BOROUGHS.

WORTHING MUNICIPAL BOROUGH (WEST SUSSEX).

Population (1891), 16,606. Rateable Value (1892–93), £95,348.

Letter from *W. H. B. Fletcher*, Mayor, 6th April 1895.

I AM not able to give as full an account as I could wish of the relief given by private agencies during the frost, as I have failed to obtain the exact information required.

1. There was during the prolonged frost certainly more distress than usual in the Borough of Worthing. This increase was certainly due to the severe weather. In a town like Worthing there are always in the depth of winter a certain amount of men connected with the building trades out of work; also, as the place is largely made up of detached and semi-detached villas, a number of jobbing gardeners are required during the summer months, but not so much in the winter. The earnings, too, of fly-drivers and boatmen who cater for the visitors to the seaside must be very small in the winter.

2. It is very difficult for the Town Council to find work for the unemployed. The weather which prevents tradesmen and private residents from finding work for their men also has the same effect in stopping work being carried out by a public authority. The Borough Surveyor was able to put a certain number of men at work picking flints from the beach and cracking them for use on the roads. These men were paid 2*s.* 6*d.* a yard, the estimated value of the flints to the town, allowing for the material being inferior to the inland flints, and for the cost of carting them to the place where they were required. It also happened that a surface drain was required in one of our roads; a certain number of men were employed on the work at 2*s.* 6*d.* per diem. This, again, was the estimated value of their labour to the town. As the men were unskilled in the work for the most part, and the hardness of the soil was against them, it is plain that their labour was not worth as much as that of skilled labourers working under normal circumstances. The preference was given to married men with families. The numbers employed and the amounts paid were as follows, as far as can be ascertained, having regard to the fact that two or three men would club together in collecting and breaking flints, but that one perhaps would receive the pay for himself and mates, thus making it impossible to state the number who actually shared in the payments made:—

				£.	*s.*	*d.*
Week ended 14 February	24	men	collecting, &c., flints	12	3	4
„ 21 „	34	„	„ „	21	1	1
„ 28 „	27	„	„ „	16	3	—
„ 7 March	20	„	„ „	13	2	2
„ 21 February	13	men	on surface drain	9	16	—
„ 28 „	10	„	„ „	3	15	6
				76	1	1

We

We have in the town a society called the Provident Relief Society, which during the winter months, December to March, distributes to the sick and aged poor coals at 6*d.* per cwt. once a week, and soup at 1*d.* per quart, with bread at ½*d.* per two-pound loaf twice or thrice a week, according to severity of weather and amount of illness in the town. The term "aged," roughly speaking, means sixty years or upwards, but is interpreted very liberally by the committee. Practically, the soup and bread are given to all comers, being very generally fetched by children after morning school, as well as by older people. During the week ended 16th February there were thus distributed 332 cwts. of coal to 332 people; 1,420 quarts of soup and two-pound loaves of bread to about 900 people. During the week ended 25th February there were distributed 367 cwt. of coal to 367 people; 1,960 gallons of soup and two-pound loaves to about 1,000 people. The exact numbers cannot be ascertained, as when families were large, or there seemed good reasons otherwise, people were permitted to have a double allowance of soup and bread. Through another private agency dinners at ½*d.* each were distributed to children at St. George's Mission Room daily, *i.e.*, Sundays and week-days. The numbers handed in to me for the weeks ended 16th and 25th February amount for the 14 days to 6,500 dinners. Through yet another agency free breakfasts were given to children at the Primitive Methodist Chapel. I have not been able to ascertain the numbers, but should put them at 150—175 per diem.

3. No unemployed register is maintained.

4. I can suggest no way of preventing the occurrence of distress in the winter months, especially in the case of prolonged frost, causing want of employment. Something, perhaps, might be done by teaching children the necessity of providing against a rainy day by lessons on thrift, and chiefly by encouraging them to use the Post Office Savings Bank for the purpose; encouraging them, when they begin to earn money, to place part of it weekly in the bank during the summer, withdrawing it for use during the winter. This can be commenced, practically, during the years they are attending school through the medium of penny banks in connection with the Post Office. The success of these banks really depends, to a great extent, on the masters, on whom the greater part of the labour and account keeping falls. The managers have their own professions and business to attend to, and cannot (even if qualified to do so) take an active part in managing the school bank. Some means are required of making it worth the teacher's while to take an interest in the bank. At least the Education Department might allow of the work being done in school hours. I am the corresponding manager of The Worthing Boys' National School, with an average attendance of 160; school fee, 1*d.* per week. The boys are sons of small tradesmen, foremen, and others in pretty constant employ. I append the withdrawals and deposits since the end of the summer holidays, as copied from the bank book. (*The total deposits amounted to* 22*l.* 14*s.*, *and the withdrawals to* 14*l.* 0*s.* 4*d.*). The master of the above school takes great interest in the savings bank. The work of taking and giving out the money is done on Monday morning before the registers are closed, in the time devoted to religious instruction during the other days of the week. The above figures show that the boys learn the value of putting away money against the need for its use. They also appear to show, by the amount and regularity of making the deposits during the months of January, February, March, that even if there were distress caused by want of employment it did not reach the tradesmen and upper strata of the labouring classes. I cannot help thinking that when once the labouring classes learn the facility with which money can be paid into and withdrawn from the Post Office Savings Banks they will avail themselves of these banks as a matter of course, especially when they fully realise the absolute safety afforded by the Government. These advantages can be learnt most easily during school days. Hence the great importance of the Education Department and the Post Office putting all possible inducements before managers and teachers to lead them to foster school penny banks. There are too many histories of private savings banks having come to grief to hope that the adults will take kindly to putting by money for the future. I know at the present time a most respectable old man in the town who has three times lost his money through the failure of clubs. Such a man is a beacon of caution to scores of men; a standing warning against thrift.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

Gower Rural District (Glamorgan).

Population (1891), 7,432. Rateable Value (1892–93), £32,161.

Letter from *T. Penrice*, Chairman, 9th April 1895.

The relief list of this Union is not heavier than usual, nor does there appear to be any unusual distress from want of employment. The out-door relief amounts to 29*l.* for the week.

V.—RURAL DISTRICTS.

Colwyn Rural District (Radnor).

Population (1891), 2,012. Rateable Value (1892–93), £———.

Letter from *E. Owen*, Clerk, 15th April 1895.

There has been no scarcity of employment within the Colwyn Rural District, and therefore no distress from want of employment.

LAUNCESTON (CORNWALL), LAUNCESTON (DEVON), } RURAL DISTRICTS { (CORNWALL). (DEVON).

Population (1891) { Launceston (Cornwall), 8,937 / Ditto (Devon) - 2,592 } Rateable Value (1892-93), £73,615.

Letter from *G. G. White*, Clerk, 11th April 1895.

FORWARDING copy of a letter addressed to the Board's Inspector of the District on 15th February 1895.

(Extract from letter above referred to).

"There is not much destitution among the able-bodied poor, not a single application having been made from amongst them to my Board. In this town the masons and others who have been thrown out of work have been employed in clearing the snow and ice from the streets, and a fund has been raised by public subscription, and coal, bacon, and groceries distributed amongst the poor, three of these distributions having already taken place. In addition, there is a good deal of private charity. I find that in nearly, if not all, the country parishes in this Union the landed proprietors and others have given firing and other charities to their deserving poor."

TAMWORTH RURAL DISTRICT (STAFFORD, DERBY, AND WARWICK).

Population (1891), 15,085. Rateable Value (1892-93), £———.

Letter from *J. Shaw*, Clerk, 10th April 1895.

THERE is not any exceptional distress from want of employment in this Union. I am to refer you to my letter to the Local Government Board of the 8th February, and to say, that although during the late severe weather many persons were thrown out of work, that exceptional state of things does not now exist, and so far as the want of employment is concerned we do not hear of any serious complaints.

(Letter above referred to).

PAUPERISM AND DISTRESS.

Sir, Tamworth Union, Tamworth, 8th February 1895.

I laid the Circular Letter of the Local Government Board, dated the 24th ultimo, on this subject before the Guardians at their last meeting, when they passed the resolution copy of which I beg to enclose.

The Relieving Officer made a report to the Guardians embodying his opinion as to the increase or otherwise of distress, and a copy of that report I also enclose.

There are in this Union a variety of trades and industries, and it is very rarely that all of them are depressed or suffering at the same time, and therefore depression in any one trade does not materially affect the general prosperity of the district.

The agriculturists as a class are now the greatest sufferers, and in the purely rural parishes work is somewhat difficult to obtain.

The present most severe weather is no doubt throwing many persons both in the town and in the country out of work, who are not likely to apply for relief. They are privately being, and will be, assisted, where necessary, to tide over this exceptional season.

I am, &c.

To the Secretary of the Local Government Board. (signed) *John Shaw.*

P.S.—This letter has been read to the Relieving Officer, who agrees with all that I have here stated.

(Resolution referred to).

The Circular Letter of the Local Government Board, dated the 24th January, having been read,

Resolved, that "the Board be informed that the Guardians are of opinion that there has not been any material increase in the number of applications for relief, and that such applications compare favourably with those in the corresponding weeks in the previous two or three years, and that the Guardians are not anticipating any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which they have to deal."

(Relieving Officer's report referred to).

I do not consider there has been any considerable increase in the applications for relief, and that the present condition compares favourably with the past two or three years; the out-relief is gradually increasing, but this does not apply to the able-bodied class. There is no doubt a scarcity of work both among miners and ordinary labourers, but I do not think it is of sufficient extent to require the Guardians to make special provision at present. In this district the cause no doubt is that the labour market is overstocked.

VALLEY RURAL DISTRICT (ANGLESEY).

Population (1891), 10,793. Rateable Value (1892-93), £50,841.

Letter from *J. E. Hughes*, Clerk, 11th April 1895.

THERE has been no distress, but, on the contrary, there has been a scarcity of labour in this district.

APPENDIX No. 6.

PAPER delivered in by Sir *Hugh Owen*, K.C.B., 21 February 1895.

STATEMENT showing the Sums received and Paid in respect of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, the Indoor Pauper Grant, and the London (Equalisation of Rates) Act, 1894, Equalisation Fund.

	Metropolitan Common Poor Fund year ended Michaelmas, 1893.		Indoor Pauper Grant year ended Lady Day, 1894.		Equalisation Fund. year ended Lady Day, 1895.		TOTAL.	
	Receipts.	Payments.	Net Amounts received.	Net Contributions.	Net Amounts received.	Net Contributions.	Receipts.	Payments.
					(estimated) †	(estimated) †		
Bethnal Green	25,361	—	8,712	—	14,346	—	48,419	—
Camberwell	13,552	—	1,266	—	23,782	—	38,600	—
Chelsea	3,191	—	2,783	—	844	—	6,818	—
George, St. in-the-East	17,248	—	7,238	—	3,962	—	28,448	—
Greenwich	17,865	—	4,336	—	12,218	—	34,419	—
Lambeth	16,645	—	2,853	—	15,426	—	34,924	—
Mile End Old Town	12,990	—	4,715	—	11,868	—	29,573	—
Olave's, St.	13,721	—	3,468	—	5,082	—	22,271	—
Pancras, St.	16,027	—	7,034	—	7,534	—	30,595	—
Poplar	20,242	—	3,759	—	15,702	—	39,703	—
Saviour's, St.	28,373	—	10,821	—	11,144	—	50,338	—
Shoreditch	13,045	—	4,521	—	6,712	—	24,278	—
Stepney	10,317	—	3,321	—	3,544	—	17,182	—
Whitechapel	12,987	—	3,621	—	4,272	—	20,880	—
Woolwich	8,774	—	1,760	—	9,442	—	19,976	—
Fulham	—	2,119	—	3,349	14,530	—	9,062	—
Giles, St., and St. George, Bloomsbury	2,002	—	2,282	—	—	2,802	1,482	—
Hackney	5,643	—	—	105	16,382	—	21,920	—
Holborn	23,536	—	12,349	—	—	388	35,497	—
Islington	—	10,257	—	3,836	20,992	—	6,899	—
Lewisham	—	6,291	—	2,692	2,730	—	—	6,253
Marylebone, St.	1,068	—	3,822	—	—	10,444	—	5,554
Wandsworth and Clapham	—	12,662	—	8,575	17,472	—	—	3,765
George's, St.	—	41,005	—	11,640	—	41,182	—	93,827
Hampstead	—	16,203	—	4,902	—	3,624	—	24,729
Kensington	—	27,585	—	8,067	—	18,074	—	53,726
London, City of	—	103,508	—	31,099	—	96,766	—	231,373
Paddington	—	21,656	—	7,142	—	9,542	—	38,340
Strand	—	7,709	—	3,409	—	18,814	—	29,932
Westminster	—	15,238	—	3,845	—	15,210	—	34,293
Gray's Inn	—	—	—	—	—	354	—	354
Lincoln's Inn	—	706	—	—	—	512	—	1,218
Inner Temple	—	—	—	—	—	552	—	552
Middle Temple	—	—	—	—	—	350	—	350
	262,587	264,939	88,661	88,661	217,984*	218,614	521,284	524,266

* In addition to the above amount £630, (estimated), for the Croydon Union in respect of Penge Parish.

† These are the amounts which would have been received or paid if the Equalisation of Rates (London) Act had been in force for the whole year.

Statistical Department,
Local Government Board,
February 18th 1895.

APPENDIX No. 7.

PAPERS handed in by Mr. *Edward Pitts Fenton*, 1 March 1895.

[*Amended Return.*] (A.)

ST. OLAVE'S UNION.

NUMBER of Men employed in the Out-door Labour Yard.

1895:		1895:		1895:	
* 7 January	156	25 January	805	13 February	1,527
8 „	517	26 „	747	14 „	1,499
† 9 „	—	28 „	494	15 „	1,531
10 „	103	29 „	550	16 „	1,601
11 „	180	30 „	1,032	18 „	917
12 „	189	31 „	1,058	19 „	838
14 „	264	1 February	901	20 „	1,729
15 „	209	2 „	997	21 „	1,759
16 „	390	4 „	696	22 „	1,613
17 „	461	5 „	630	23 „	1,480
18 „	421	6 „	1,270	25 „	676
19 „	464	7 „	1,252	26 „	589
21 „	405	8 „	1,407	27 „	1,269
22 „	482	9 „	1,292	28 „	1,317
23 „	539	11 „	694	TOTAL Number of Men employed	38,390
24 „	817	12 „	623		

* First day opened. † Closed.

(B.)

OPINIONS as to Distress in Union, and Causes thereof.

What is your Opinion as to the Distress in your District?	District 1.	District 2.	District 3.	District 4.	District 5.	District 6.
Is it more than usual	Yes	Yes	Yes	Exceptional	Exceptional	Exceptional
If so, what is the cause	—	General depression in trade.	Slackness in shipping trade and general depression.	—	—	—
Is it on account of want of work generally, or on account of want of work occasioned by the severe weather; or is it partly one and partly the other cause.	Partly one and partly the other cause.	Partly one and partly the other cause.	Partly one and partly the other cause.	Partly one and partly the other cause.	Partly one and partly the other cause.	Partly one and partly the other cause.

(C.)

ST. OLAVE'S UNION.

Out-door Poor.

	Number of Persons Relieved. Michaelmas Half Year.				Amount of Relief Given. Michaelmas Half Year.			
	1891.	1892.	1893.	1894.	1891.	1892.	1893.	1894.
					£.	£.	£.	£.
1st week	2,410	2,859	2,649	2,813	204	229	224	267
2nd „	2,542	2,864	2,801	2,808	213	240	245	205
3rd „	2,587	2,747	2,843	2,708	214	200	203	269
4th „	2,586	2,802	2,740	2,716	230	199	202	208
5th „	2,624	2,870	2,732	2,637	223	197	198	263
6th „	2,662	2,921	2,785	2,562	230	334	323	208
7th „	2,716	2,904	2,811	2,449	233	202	202	258
8th „	2,675	2,865	2,769	2,537	227	251	271	209
9th „	2,724	2,851	2,785	2,506	229	203	208	256
10th „	2,681	2,820	2,801	2,498	227	287	264	209
11th „	2,711	2,752	2,755	2,497	229	203	206	254
12th „	2,615	2,761	2,768	2,485	228	260	259	208
13th „	2,612	2,850	2,780	2,552	231	201	206	250
14th „	2,488	2,808	2,677	2,516	208	258	239	206
15th „	2,537	2,762	2,646	2,544	210	205	204	255
16th „	2,561	2,747	2,658	2,512	220	268	271	207
17th „	2,549	2,731	2,673	2,503	217	201	207	251
18th „	2,529	2,758	2,657	2,455	215	253	231	198
19th „	2,530	2,807	2,701	2,467	214	201	203	246
20th „	2,579	2,750	2,693	2,525	217	256	293	208
21st „	2,551	2,655	2,675	2,511	213	203	207	253
22nd „	2,556	2,596	2,654	2,491	213	248	255	209
23rd „	2,608	2,643	2,668	2,472	214	201	216	251
24th „	2,531	2,656	2,671	2,519	213	249	255	206
25th „	2,533	2,609	2,690	2,527	213	200	204	248
26th „	2,511	2,612	2,661	2,538	211	249	257	206
27th „	2,603	2,619	2,652	–	220	238	212	—

	Number of Persons Relieved. Lady-day Half Year.				Amount of Relief Given. Lady-day Half Year.			
	1892.	1893.	1894.	1895.	1892.	1893.	1894.	1895.
					£.	£.	£.	£.
1st week	2,353	2,367	2,611	2,559	203	213	249	234
2nd „	2,446	2,495	2,569	2,553	206	202	208	206
3rd „	2,525	2,509	2,570	2,575	222	254	250	249
4th „	2,579	2,573	2,692	2,548	220	203	208	207
5th „	2,542	2,657	2,750	2,604	224	257	255	265
6th „	2,602	2,605	2,757	2,552	225	205	208	212
7th „	2,590	2,695	2,778	2,518	225	255	261	256
8th „	2,626	2,731	2,876	2,498	207	205	206	213
9th „	2,736	2,829	2,852	2,546	245	264	265	250
10th „	2,630	2,862	2,791	2,526	208	206	205	214
11th „	2,726	2,827	2,806	2,620	250	266	266	256
12th „	2,627	2,805	2,788	2,618	210	205	205	213
13th „	2,637	2,805	2,693	2,578	240	204	267	212
14th „	2,737	2,906	2,713	2,629	200	293	204	211
15th „	2,914	3,046	2,765	*4,760	270	236	264	*468
16th „	2,980	3,055	2,775	5,502	220	203	205	213
17th „	3,078	3,081	2,838	6,738	285	313	202	972
18th „	2,862	3,189	2,821	7,982	200	203	206	250
19th „	2,885	3,160	2,809	9,888	276	290	281	1,884
20th „	2,817	3,059	2,787	10,175	190	204	206	265
21st „	2,942	3,260	2,760	–	274	284	269	—
22nd „	2,942	3,189	2,808	–	203	202	205	—
23rd „	2,984	3,255	2,794	–	276	282	267	—
24th „	2,994	3,239	2,809	–	203	203	203	—
25th „	2,957	3,250	2,773	–	277	274	270	—
26th „	–	–	2,828	–	–	–	206	—

* Labour Yard opened this week.

(D.)

ST. OLAVE'S UNION.

In-door Poor.

	Number of Persons Relieved. Michaelmas Half Year.					Number of Persons Relieved. Lady-day Half Year.			
	1891.	1892.	1893.	1894.		1892.	1893.	1894.	1895.
1st week	1,221	1,182	1,237	1,323	1st week	1,059	1,126	1,220	1,251
2nd „	1,236	1,185	1,237	1,299	2nd „	1,074	1,144	1,233	1,250
3rd „	1,198	1,193	1,239	1,300	3rd „	1,091	1,149	1,240	1,292
4th „	1,179	1,183	1,216	1,278	4th „	1,090	1,177	1,276	1,309
5th „	1,172	1,182	1,188	1,283	5th „	1,108	1,177	1,273	1,304
6th „	1,137	1,165	1,200	1,262	6th „	1,085	1,194	1,320	1,295
7th „	1,128	1,153	1,181	1,270	7th „	1,110	1,215	1,307	1,308
8th „	1,130	1,167	1,181	1,275	8th „	1,119	1,228	1,317	1,334
9th „	1,239	1,152	1,160	1,275	9th „	1,149	1,252	1,318	1,345
10th „	1,106	1,111	1,163	1,259	10th „	1,140	1,281	1,339	1,342
11th „	1,112	1,138	1,152	1,268	11th „	1,160	1,275	1,341	1,371
12th „	1,061	1,127	1,173	1,254	12th „	1,168	1,261	1,359	1,373
13th „	1,058	1,123	1,152	1,253	13th „	1,188	1,312	1,363	1,386
14th „	1,040	1,111	1,160	1,256	14th „	1,207	1,319	1,386	1,401
15th „	1,104	1,111	1,173	1,283	15th „	1,238	1,352	1,390	* 1,438
16th „	1,053	1,111	1,175	1,277	16th „	1,270	1,338	1,397	1,423
17th „	1,044	1,131	1,175	1,277	17th „	1,288	1,346	1,390	1,429
18th „	1,081	1,130	1,168	1,246	18th „	1,273	1,313	1,386	1,452
19th „	1,037	1,104	1,147	1,237	19th „	1,238	1,319	1,383	1,462
20th „	1,033	1,113	1,126	1,226	20th „	1,246	1,274	1,364	1,481
21st „	1,072	1,120	1,130	1,253	21st „	1,200	1,267	1,363	—
22nd „	1,058	1,087	1,113	1,245	22nd „	1,210	1,257	1,352	—
23rd „	1,041	1,092	1,140	1,264	23rd „	1,205	1,254	1,361	—
24th „	1,037	1,083	1,144	1,249	24th „	1,192	1,226	1,341	—
25th „	1,037	1,109	1,136	1,255	25th „	1,194	1,247	1,329	—
26th „	1,039	1,100	1,164	1,234	26th „	–	–	1,315	—
27th „	1,034	1,106	1,186	—					

* Labour Yard opened this week.

(E.)

EXPENDITURE ON OUT RELIEF.

	Total for Year.		Total for Year.
Year ending Lady day:	£.	Year ending Lady-day:	£.
1873	10,218	1887	7,792
1874	10,004	1888	8,199
1875	9,213	1889	9,296
1876	9,624	1890	10,562
1877	9,502	1891	11,372
1878	9,203	1892	12,301
1879	7,928	1893	12,421
1880	7,144	1894	12,733
1881	6,572		£.
1882	6,677	26 weeks of Michaelmas 1894	6,053
1883	6,149	20 weeks of Lady-day 1895	7,047
1884	5,215		13,100
1885	5,660	46 weeks.	
1886	6,052		

	£.
Week ending 9th February	1,884
	6 weeks.
	11,304
	13,100
	£24,404

(F.)

ST. OLAVE'S UNION.

RETURN of Callings and Occupations of Men in the Labour Yard, Two Weeks ended 20th February 1895.

Army accoutrement maker	1
Bakers	7
Blacksmiths	6
Bricklayers	25
Book makers	2
Brush makers	8
Butchers	2
Biscuit maker	1
Bargebuilders	7
Barman	1
Boot makers	4
Boiler scaler	1
Boiler makers	2
Blacking maker	1
Cabinet makers	5
Cellarmen	2
Carpenters	7
Carmen	99
Coopers	5
Cheesemonger	1
Coach painter	1
Coffee roaster	1
Costermongers	2
Cutter	1
Clerk	1
Coulter (ship's)	1
Cooks (ship's)	2
Chairmaker	1
Chimney sweep	1
Engineers	5
Farriers	2
Fishmongers	2
Fish smokers	2
Fitters	3
Firemen (ship's)	3
Fellmonger	1
Furniture polisher	1
Grooms	2
Glass blower	1
Grocer	1
Glue maker	1
Horsekeepers	4
Hotel servants	2
Hairdresser	1
Hawkers	9
Iron galvanisers	2
Iron moulder	1
Labourers:	
Brewers	1
Bricklayers	81
Builders	17
Dock	82
Dyers	1
Engineers	7
General	241
Ironworkers	7
Market	3
Printers	11
Skin	2
Smiths	2
Tanners	5
Waterside	977
Leather finishers	5
Leather dyers	11
Leather dressers	16
Leather fleshers	5
Lightermen	21
Mariners	5
Metal worker	1
Milkman	1
Miller	1
Machinist	1
Newsvendor	1
Organ grinder	1
Oil miller	1
Packers	2
Painters	32
Pastrycook	1
Printers	9
Paper stainer	1
Plumbers	2
Porters:	
Kitchen	1
General	13
Railway	2
Coal	2
Potman	1
Portmanteau makers	2
Rag sorter	1
Rivetter	1
Rope maker	1
Sawyers	4
Scale maker	1
Shipwrights	6
Scaffolder	1
Stevedore	1
Stoker	1
Slaters	2
Size maker	1
Sail maker	1
Tanners	55
Tinker	1
Tailor	1
Tinplate workers	9
Tank maker	1
Traveller	1
Varnish maker	1
Warehouseman	1
Watermen	4
Woodcutters	2
Wheelwright	1
Zinc worker	1
	1,915

Total Classes 110

FIVE CLASSES:—

Labourers:	
General	241
Waterside	977
Bricklayers	81
Dock	82
Carmen	99
	1,480

(G.)

ST. OLAVE'S UNION.

VAGRANTS RELIEVED on the Night of Friday.

Date.	Men.	Women.	Children.	TOTAL.	Date.	Men.	Women.	Children.	TOTAL.
3 April 1891	7	–	–	7	1 April 1892	11	–	–	11
10 April „	7	–	–	7	8 April „	11	1	–	12
17 April „	7	–	–	7	15 April „	8	–	–	8
24 April „	10	–	–	10	22 April „	17	1	–	18
1 May „	13	–	–	13	29 April „	23	–	–	23
8 May „	10	1	–	11	6 May „	27	–	–	27
15 May „	11	–	–	11	13 May „	20	–	–	20
22 May „	17	–	–	17	20 May „	10	1	–	11
29 May „	12	1	–	13	27 May „	6	1	–	7
5 June „	5	1	–	6	3 June „	12	2	–	14
12 June „	10	–	–	10	10 June „	18	4	2	24
19 June „	9	1	1	11	17 June „	14	–	–	14
26 June „	3	1	–	4	24 June „	12	1	–	13
3 July „	8	–	–	8	1 July „	11	1	–	12
10 July „	9	1	–	10	8 July „	17	–	–	17
17 July „	9	–	–	9	15 July „	14	1	–	15
24 July „	7	–	–	7	22 July „	14	1	–	15
31 July „	12	–	–	12	29 July „	12	4	1	17
7 August „	12	–	–	12	5 August „	16	–	–	16
14 August „	8	2	–	10	12 August „	14	2	–	16
21 August „	16	2	–	18	19 August „	13	1	–	14
28 August „	10	–	–	10	26 August „	2	1	–	3
4 September „	10	–	–	10	2 September „	7	–	–	7
11 September „	6	–		6	9 September „	14	1	–	15
18 September „	12	2		14	16 September „	14	1	2	17
25 September „	6	–		6	23 September „	25	1	–	26
2 October „	13	–	–	13	30 September „	30	–	–	30
9 October „	22	1	–	23	7 October „	38	1	–	39
16 October „	26	2	–	28	14 October „	34	1	1	36
23 October „	21	–	–	21	21 October „	38	–	–	38
30 October „	32	1	2	35	28 October „	32	–	–	32
6 November „	17	3	–	20	4 November „	28	–	–	28
13 November „	26	1	–	27	18 November „	32	–	–	32
20 November „	23	1	–	24	25 November „	27	–	–	27
27 November „	22	1	–	23	2 December „	28	–	–	28
4 December „	26	–	–	26	9 December „	38	–	–	38
11 December „	22	–	–	22	16 December „	20	–	–	20
18 December „	26	–	–	26	23 December „	15	–	–	15
25 December „	13	–	–	13	30 December „	38	1	–	39
1 January 1892	14	–	–	14	6 January 1893	22	–	–	22
8 January „	24	–	–	24	13 January „	21	–	–	21
15 January „	15	1	–	16	20 January „	28	–	–	28
22 January „	23	1	–	24	27 January „	11	–	–	11
29 January „	9	–	–	9	3 February „	19	–	–	19
5 February „	14	–	–	14	10 February „	7	1	–	8
12 February „	18	1	–	19	17 February „	25	–	–	25
19 February „	24	–	–	24	24 February „	28	2	–	30
26 February „	28	–	–	28	3 March „	14	1	–	15
4 March „	28	1	–	29	10 March „	18	–	–	18
11 March „	29	–	–	29	17 March „	3	–	–	3
18 March „	17	–	–	17	24 March „	4	–	–	4
25 March „	25	–	–	25	31 March „	5	–	–	5

Vagrants Relieved on the Night of Friday—*continued.*

Date.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.	Date.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.
7 April 1893	4	1	–	25	23 March 1894	21	1	–	22
14 April „	16	–	–	16	30 March „	18	1	–	19
21 April „	11	–	–	11	6 April „	24	2	–	26
28 April „	13	1	–	14	13 April „	22	–	–	22
5 May „	13	–	–	13	20 April „	26	1	–	27
12 May „	20	1	–	21	27 April „	15	1	–	16
19 May „	13	–	–	13	4 May „	54	2	–	56
26 May „	20	1	–	21	11 May „	19	2	–	21
2 June „	13	4	–	17	18 May „	24	–	–	24
9 June „	23	1	–	24	25 May „	26	2	–	28
16 June „	10	–	1	11	1 June „	31	3	–	34
23 June „	17	–	–	17	8 June „	21	4	–	25
30 June „	16	–	–	16	15 June „	10	3	–	13
7 July „	10	1	–	11	22 June „	16	2	–	18
14 July „	26	1	–	27	29 June „	13	–	–	13
28 July „	11	1	–	12	6 July „	9	–	–	9
4 August „	25	1	–	26	13 July „	13	2	–	15
11 August „	13	–	–	13	20 July „	14	1	–	15
18 August „	13	1	–	14	27 July „	8	1	–	9
25 August „	10	1	–	11	3 August „	13	2	–	15
1 September „	14	–	–	14	10 August „	20	4	–	24
8 September „	14	–	–	14	17 August „	–	–	Wards closed for repairs, &c.	
15 September „	16	–	–	16	24 August „	–	–	– ditto.	—
22 September „	37	1	4	42	31 August „	–	–	– ditto.	—
29 September „	33	2	–	35	7 September „	–	–	– ditto.	—
6 October „	22	1	–	23	14 September „	10	–	–	10
13 October „	30	1	1	32	21 September „	22	–	–	22
20 October „	20	–	–	20	28 September „	13	–	–	13
27 October „	20	2	–	22	5 October „	13	2	–	15
3 November „	30	1	–	31	12 October „	23	4	–	27
10 November „	30	1	–	31	19 October „	28	3	–	31
17 November „	25	–	–	25	26 October „	26	2	–	28
24 November „	24	–	–	24	2 November „	31	5	1	37
1 December „	34	1	–	35	9 November „	29	1	–	30
8 December „	16	1	1	18	16 November „	37	2	–	39
15 December „	23	–	–	23	23 November „	28	2	1	31
22 December „	23	1	–	24	30 November „	28	–	–	28
29 December „	27	–	–	27	7 December „	35	1	–	36
					14 December „	33	–	–	33
					21 December „	13	–	–	13
5 January 1894	23	–	–	23	28 December „	26	–	–	26
12 January „	32	1	–	33					
19 January „	21	–	–	21					
26 January „	32	–	–	32					
2 February „	34	2	–	36	4 January 1895	22	–	–	22
9 February „	30	2	–	32	11 January „	31	–	–	31
16 February „	29	–	1	30	18 January „	17	–	–	17
23 February „	37	–	–	37	25 January „	24	–	–	24
2 March „	24	1	–	25	1 February „	26	2	–	28
9 March „	25	2	–	27	8 February „	23	1	–	24
16 March „	28	–	–	28	15 February „	30	4	–	34

ST. OLAVE'S UNION.

RETURN in reply to Inquiries of Local Government Board as to Distress in the Union—31st January 1895.

QUESTION.	REPLIES.					
	District 1.	District 2.	District 3.	District 4.	District 5.	District 6.
1. Whether there has been, during the recent winter months, any material increase in the number of applications for relief.	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes.
2. How the number of such applications compare with those in the corresponding weeks in the previous two or three years.	About the same.	No material difference in the number of applications.	About 5 per cent., independent of stoneyard men.	On the increase	On the increase	On the increase.
3. Whether you are anticipating any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which you have to deal.	No	No, so far as regards the ordinary type of cases.	No	No	No	No.
4. Whether you contemplate that any exceptional arrangements, the opening of the labour yard excepted, will be necessary to enable you to do so satisfactorily.	No	No	No	No	No	No.
5. Whether you consider that there is distress of an exceptional character amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief.	No	No, with the exception of applications for work in the stoneyard.	No	No; the distress existing appears to be chiefly among the waterside and dock labourers, &c., and will probably continue for some months.	No; the distress existing appears to be amongst the waterside and dock labourers, and will probably continue so until next May.	No; the distress existing appears to be chiefly amongst the waterside and dock labourers, &c., and will probably continue so until May next.
6. If so, state your views as to the extent of such distress, the classes and occupations of the work-people amongst whom the distress is most marked, and the probability of its continuance.	Sack and water side work about the same.	The stoneyard not having been opened for about five years, I am unable to gauge extent of any distress arising from want of work, but the applications are most numerous from general waterside labourers, carmen and labourers in leather trade, and with one or two exceptions, are entirely of the lowest class	—			
7. To what extent is it considered that such distress is in excess of, or less than, that in the corresponding period of other recent years.	Condemned houses may have affected this district to some extent.	—	—	The amount of relief given in No. 4 District is exceptionally greater than in any period previously for some years, and is greatly on the increase.	The amount of relief in kind given in my district last week was more than that of last year, is treble.	The amount of out-relief given in kind in my district during last week was more than that of last year—treble.

ST. OLAVE'S UNION.

RETURN as to Inquiries made by Relieving Officers as to Men applying for Orders for the Labour Yard.

QUESTIONS TO RELIEVING OFFICERS.	ANSWERS OF RELIEVING OFFICERS. DISTRICTS					
	No. 1.	No. 2.	No. 3.	No. 4.	No. 5.	No. 6.
1. Are exhaustive inquiries made into every application received by you from able-bodied men for relief.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes.
2. Are these inquiries made before the applicant is granted an order for the labour yard.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes.
3. If not before the applicant enters the yard, are they made before he receives relief on the first day of being in the labour yard.	All inquiries made first.	Yes	Yes	—	—	*See* answer to Query 2.
4. In the case of a man being in the labour yard, and your finding subsequently that false statements have been made to you, what action do you take.	Write the superintendent not to admit, or stop the ticket at pay time.	No occasion for action at present.	No occasion for action at present.	Have had no occasion to take any action in consequence of the statements being verified before the ticket is given.	Had no occasion to take any action.	Have had no occasion to take any action in consequence of the statements being verified before the ticket is given.

APPENDIX, No. 8.

PAPER handed in by Mr. *Pitts Fenton*, March 1895.

ST. OLAVE'S UNION.

OUT-DOOR LABOUR YARD REGULATIONS.

THE labour yard of this union will be open every morning from 10 until a quarter past 10 o'clock.

Every person will be allowed half-an-hour for dinner, namely, from 1 till half-past 1 o'clock. The door will be shut at 35 minutes past 1 o'clock precisely.

A person will not be admitted without an order, to be obtained from the relieving officer of the district in which the applicant resides, at 9 o'clock in the morning at the Relief Office, Tanner-street, Bermondsey (Districts 1, 2, and 3), and the Relief Office, Lower-road, Rotherhithe (Districts 4, 5, and 6). No order will be issued after 9.30, and no order will be issued to men residing in lodging-houses in the union, or to men who have not resided continuously in the union for the past six months.

Every person will be required to break nine bushels of stone, or pick 4 lbs. of oakum, as directed.

Each person shall measure or weigh the task performed by him in such manner and at such time as the superintendent shall direct, and shall also wheel or carry the same to the place appointed for its reception.

Every person will have to remain in the yard until 5 o'clock.

Smoking will not be allowed in the yard.

The superintendent will have no power to allow any person leave of absence during the working hours.

Any person neglecting to work, or to obey the orders of the superintendent, will be at once dismissed from the yard, and will not be re-admitted without an order from the guardians. Should he in consequence become chargeable, he will be taken before a magistrate and dealt with accordingly.

The relief granted will be 1*s.* 8*d.* in money, 2 lbs. of meat, 4 lbs. of bread, and 4 oz. of tea per day, according to the following scale :—

Single man		2 days' work per week.
Man and wife		" " "
Ditto	and 1 child dependent	3 " " "
Ditto	and 2 children dependent	" " "
Ditto	and 3 " "	4 " " "
Ditto	and 4 " "	" " "
Ditto	and 5 children or upwards dependent	5 " " "

If any relative or relatives dependent, one additional day's work in the labour yard to be given, at the discretion of the relieving officers.

Relief will be paid daily between 5 p.m. and 5.30 p.m., on the certificate of the superintendent of the labour yard, by the relieving officers at their offices.

(By Order)

Clerk's Offices, 30, Tanner-street, Bermondsey, S.E.,
10 January 1895.

E. Pitts Fenton, Clerk.

RETURN as to Inquiries made by Relieving Officers as to Men applying for Orders for the Labour Yard.

Questions to Relieving Officers.	Answers of Relieving Officers. Districts.					
	No. 1.	No. 2.	No. 3.	No. 4.	No. 5.	No. 6.
1. Are exhaustive inquiries made into every application received by you from able-bodied men for relief?	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.
2. Are these inquiries made before the applicant is granted an order for the labour yard?	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.
3. If not before the applicant enters the yard, are they made before he receives relief on the first day of being in the labour yard?	All inquiries made first.	Yes.	Yes.	—	—	*See* answer to Query 2.
4. In the case of a man being in the labour yard and your finding subsequently that false statements have been made to you, what action do you take?	Write the superintendent not to admit, or stop the ticket at pay time.	No occasion for action at present.	No occasion for action at present.	Have had no occasion to take any action in consequence of the statements being verified before the ticket is given.	Had no occasion to take any action.	Have had no occasion to take any action in consequence of the statements being verified before the ticket is given.

ST. OLAVE'S UNION—*continued.*

NUMBER of MEN Employed in the Out-Door Labour Yard.

| | | |

RETURN in reply to Inquiries of Local Government Board as to Distress in the Union.

QUESTION.	REPLIES.					
	District 1.	District 2.	District 3.	District 4.	District 5.	District 6.
1. Whether there has been, during the recent winter months, any material increase in the number of applications for relief?	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes.
2. How the number of such applications compare with those in the corresponding weeks in the previous two or three years?	About the same	No material difference in the number of applications.	About 5 per cent. independent of Stoneyard men.	On the increase	On the increase	On the increase.
3. Whether you are anticipating any difficulty in meeting the destitution with which you have to deal?	No	No, so far as regards the ordinary type of cases.	No	No	No	No.
4. Whether you contemplate that any exceptional arrangements—the opening of the Labour Yard excepted—will be necessary to enable you to do so satisfactorily?	No	No	No	No	No	No.
5. Whether you consider that there is distress of an exceptional character amongst persons of the working class who have not applied for relief?	No	No, with the exception of applications for work in the Stoneyard.	No			
6. If so, state your views as to the extent of such distress, the classes and occupations of the workpeople amongst whom the distress is most marked, and the probability of its continuance?	Sack and Waterside work about the same.	The Stoneyard not having been opened for about five years, I am unable to gauge extent of any distress arising from want of work, but the applications are most numerous from general waterside labourers, carmen, and labourers in leather trade, and with one or two exceptions, are entirely of the lowest class.		No, the distress existing appears to be chiefly among the Waterside and Dock labourers, &c., and will probably continue for some months.	No, the distress existing appears to be amongst the Waterside and Dock labourers, and will probably continue so until next May.	No, the distress existing appears to be chiefly amongst the Waterside and Dock labourers, &c., and will probably continue so until May next.
7. To what extent it is considered that such distress is in excess of, or less than that in the corresponding period of other recent years?	Condemned houses may have affected this district to some extent.			The amount of relief given in No. 4 District is exceptionally greater than in any period previously for some years, and is greatly on the increase.	The amount of relief in kind given in my district last week was more than that of last year—is treble.	The amount of Out-Relief given in kind in my District during last week was more than that of last year—treble.

31 January 1895.

ST. OLAVE'S UNION—*continued.*

OUT-DOOR POOR.

Number of Persons Relieved Michaelmas Half-Year, 1891.					Number of Persons Relieved Lady-Day Half-Year, 1892.					Number of Persons Relieved Michaelmas Half-Year, 1892.				
Week.	Not Able-Bodied.	Able-Bodied.	Children.	TOTAL.	Week.	Not Able-Bodied.	Able-Bodied.	Children.	TOTAL.	Week.	Not Able-Bodied.	Able-Bodied.	Children.	TOTAL.
1st	1,036	426	948	2,410	1st	1,059	360	934	2,353	1st	1,067	571	1,221	2,859
2nd	1,051	472	1,019	2,542	2nd	1,086	378	982	2,446	2nd	1,051	472	1,019	2,542
3rd	1,053	476	1,008	2,537	3rd	1,100	410	1,015	2,525	3rd	1,061	543	1,143	2,747
4th	1,067	500	1,019	2,586	4th	1,104	443	1,032	2,579	4th	1,065	555	1,182	2,802
5th	1,069	510	1,045	2,624	5th	1,112	416	1,014	2,542	5th	1,069	581	1,220	2,870
6th	1,065	534	1,063	2,662	6th	1,109	438	1,055	2,602	6th	1,083	594	1,244	2,921
7th	1,071	537	1,108	2,716	7th	1,105	448	1,037	2,590	7th	1,091	602	1,211	2,904
8th	1,073	510	1,092	2,675	8th	1,115	448	1,063	2,626	8th	1,103	577	1,185	2,865
9th	1,072	515	1,046	2,633	9th	1,119	484	1,133	2,736	9th	1,089	570	1,192	2,851
10th	1,067	525	1,089	2,681	10th	1,117	426	1,087	2,630	10th	1,095	551	1,174	2,820
11th	1,084	528	1,099	2,711	11th	1,140	456	1,130	2,726	11th	1,084	539	1,129	2,752
12th	1,082	478	1,055	2,615	12th	1,126	425	1,076	2,627	12th	1,074	534	1,153	2,761
13th	1,086	465	1,061	2,612	13th	1,063	472	1,102	2,637	13th	1,087	573	1,190	2,850
14th	1,054	439	995	2,488	14th	1,066	529	1,142	2,737	14th	1,075	572	1,161	2,808
15th	1,063	454	1,020	2,537	15th	1,074	621	1,219	2,914	15th	1,064	544	1,154	2,762
16th	1,058	462	1,041	2,561	16th	1,061	646	1,273	2,980	16th	1,073	525	1,149	2,747
17th	1,053	444	1,052	2,549	17th	1,079	698	1,301	3,078	17th	1,069	515	1,147	2,731
18th	1,065	414	1,050	2,529	18th	1,085	601	1,176	2,862	18th	1,069	515	1,147	2,731
19th	1,066	410	1,054	2,530	19th	1,088	597	1,200	2,885	19th	1,072	550	1,185	2,807
20th	1,068	433	1,078	2,579	20th	1,088	555	1,174	2,817	20th	1,069	525	1,156	2,750
21st	1,067	434	1,050	2,551	21st	1,100	603	1,239	2,942	21st	1,057	517	1,081	2,655
22nd	1,077	428	1,051	2,556	22nd	1,104	598	1,240	2,942	22nd	1,067	482	1,047	2,596
23rd	1,063	441	1,045	2,549	23rd	1,126	619	1,239	2,984	23rd	1,069	504	1,070	2,643
24th	1,069	427	1,035	2,531	24th	1,109	613	1,272	2,994	24th	1,072	510	1,074	2,656
25th	1,058	437	1,038	2,533	25th	1,106	592	1,259	2,957	25th	1,074	485	1,050	2,609
26th	1,012	449	1,050	2,511	26th	—	—	—	—	26th	1,071	491	1,050	2,612
27th	1,057	463	1,083	2,603	27th	—	—	—	—	27th	1,070	481	1,068	2,619

Number of Persons Relieved Lady-Day Half-Year, 1893.					Number of Persons Relieved Michaelmas Half-Year, 1893.					Number of Persons Relieved Lady-Day Half-Year, 1894.				
Week.	Not Able-Bodied.	Able-Bodied.	Children.	TOTAL.	Week.	Not Able-Bodied.	Able-Bodied.	Children.	TOTAL.	Week.	Not Able-Bodied.	Able-Bodied.	Children.	TOTAL.
1st - -	1,075	428	864	2,367	1st - -	1,219	543	1,039	2,801	1st - -	1,240	420	951	2,611
2nd - -	1,087	464	944	2,495	2nd - -	1,219	543	1,039	2,801	2nd - -	1,242	404	923	2,569
3rd - -	1,112	464	933	2,509	3rd - -	1,219	527	1,097	2,843	3rd - -	1,247	402	921	2,570
4th - -	1,120	483	970	2,573	4th - -	1,218	496	1,026	2,740	4th - -	1,261	444	987	2,692
5th - -	1,133	514	1,010	2,657	5th - -	1,220	500	1,012	2,732	5th - -	1,264	472	1,014	2,750
6th - -	1,142	493	970	2,605	6th - -	1,219	509	1,057	2,785	6th - -	1,257	463	1,037	2,757
7th - -	1,156	529	1,010	2,695	7th - -	1,226	511	1,074	2,811	7th - -	1,252	471	1,055	2,778
8th - -	1,156	548	1,027	2,731	8th - -	1,216	497	1,056	2,769	8th - -	1,249	523	1,104	2,876
9th - -	1,162	591	1,076	2,829	9th - -	1,221	500	1,064	2,785	9th - -	1,240	533	1,079	2,852
10th - -	1,149	604	1,109	2,862	10th - -	1,095	551	1,174	2,830	10th - -	1,228	520	1,043	2,791
11th - -	1,153	600	1,074	2,827	11th - -	1,226	488	1,041	2,755	11th - -	1,245	516	1,045	2,806
12th - -	1,142	609	1,054	2,805	12th - -	1,235	486	1,047	2,768	12th - -	1,238	520	1,030	2,788
13th - -	1,135	604	1,066	2,805	13th - -	1,222	495	1,063	2,780	13th - -	1,215	486	992	2,693
14th - -	1,214	620	1,072	2,906	14th - -	1,188	516	973	2,677	14th - -	1,194	481	1,038	2,713
15th - -	1,230	659	1,157	3,046	15th - -	1,185	511	950	2,646	15th - -	1,209	497	1,059	2,765
16th - -	1,232	656	1,167	3,055	16th - -	1,197	506	955	2,658	16th - -	1,214	496	1,065	2,775
17th - -	1,244	678	1,159	3,081	17th - -	1,206	511	956	2,673	17th - -	1,211	527	1,100	2,838
18th - -	1,239	726	1,224	3,189	18th - -	1,197	511	949	2,657	18th - -	1,221	501	1,099	2,821
19th - -	1,250	697	1,213	3,160	19th - -	1,191	518	992	2,701	19th - -	1,231	502	1,076	2,809
20th - -	1,193	500	1,000	2,693	20th - -	1,193	500	1,000	2,693	20th - -	1,224	488	1,075	2,787
21st - -	1,198	486	991	2,675	21st - -	1,198	486	991	2,675	21st - -	1,231	474	1,055	2,760
22nd - -	1,231	674	1,284	3,189	22nd - -	1,193	492	969	2,654	22nd - -	1,228	495	1,085	2,808
23rd - -	1,260	690	1,305	3,255	23rd - -	1,192	504	972	2,668	23rd - -	1,222	502	1,070	2,794
24th - -	1,257	676	1,306	3,239	24th - -	1,195	501	975	2,671	24th - -	1,217	493	1,099	2,809
25th - -	1,257	682	1,311	3,250	25th - -	1,203	505	982	2,690	25th - -	1,226	484	1,063	2,773
26th - -	1,175	452	1,022	2,649	26th - -	1,204	489	968	2,661	26th - -	1,217	506	1,105	2,828

ST. OLAVE'S UNION—*continued.*

OUT-DOOR POOR.

Number of Persons Relieved Michaelmas Half-Year, 1894.					Number of Persons Relieved Lady-Day Half-Year, 1895.				
Week.	Not Able-Bodied.	Able-Bodied.	Children.	Total.	Week.	Not Able-Bodied.	Able-Bodied.	Children.	Total.
1st - -	1,251	512	1,050	2,813	1st - -	1,235	399	925	2,559
2nd - -	1,246	502	1,060	2,808	2nd - -	1,239	404	910	2,553
3rd - -	1,239	456	1,013	2,708	3rd - -	1,249	416	910	2,575
4th - -	2,237	462	1,017	2,716	4th - -	1,253	406	889	2,548
5th - -	1,226	444	967	2,637	5th - -	1,253	431	920	2,604
6th - -	1,220	418	924	2,562	6th - -	1,242	411	899	2,552
7th - -	1,215	406	878	2,499	7th - -	1,240	394	884	2,513
8th - -	1,218	413	906	2,537	8th - -	1,232	389	877	2,498
9th - -	1,220	402	884	2,506	9th - -	1,254	401	891	2,546
10th - -	1,212	409	877	2,498	10th - -	1,256	404	896	2,556
11th - -	1,211	410	876	2,497	11th - -	1,262	426	932	2,620
12th - -	1,207	409	869	2,485	12th - -	1,269	426	923	2,618
13th - -	1,206	434	912	2,552	13th - -	1,244	428	906	2,578
14th - -	1,203	427	886	2,516	14th - -	1,257	447	925	2,629
15th - -	1,205	431	908	2,544	15th - -	1,315	1,524	1,921	4,760
16th - -	1,207	420	885	2,512	16th - -	1,322	1,900	2,280	5,502
17th - -	1,209	419	875	2,503	17th - -	1,396	2,649	2,693	6,738
18th - -	1,195	405	855	2,455	18th - -	1,383	3,346	3,253	7,982
19th - -	1,194	409	864	2,467	19th - -	1,477	4,693	3,718	9,888
20th - -	1,204	422	899	2,525	20th - -	1,498	4,910	3,767	10,175
21st - -	1,223	388	900	2,511					
22nd - -	1,222	386	883	2,491					
23rd - -	1,209	384	879	2,472					
24th - -	1,215	393	911	2,519					
25th - -	1,205	387	935	2,527					
26th - -	1,206	380	952	2,538					

Expenditure on Out-Door Relief.

	£.		£.
Year ending Lady-Day 1873 - - - -	10,218	Year ending Lady-day 1885 - - - -	5,660
Ditto - - ditto 1874 - - - -	10,004	Ditto - - ditto 1886 - - - -	6,952
Ditto - - ditto 1875 - - - -	9,213	Ditto - - ditto 1887 - - - -	7,790
Ditto - - ditto 1876 - - - -	9,624	Ditto - - ditto 1888 - - - -	8,199
Ditto - - ditto 1877 - - - -	9,502	Ditto - - ditto 1889 - - - -	9,296
Ditto - - ditto 1878 - - - -	9,203	Ditto - - ditto 1890 - - - -	10,562
Ditto - - ditto 1879 - - - -	7,928	Ditto - - ditto 1891 - - - -	11,372
Ditto - - ditto 1880 - - - -	7,144	Ditto - - ditto 1892 - - - -	12,391
Ditto - - ditto 1881 - - - -	6,572	Ditto - - ditto 1893 - - - -	12,421
Ditto - - ditto 1882 - - - -	6,677	Ditto - - ditto 1894 - - - -	12,733
Ditto - - ditto 1883 - - - -	6,149	(46 weeks only) - 1895 - - - -	13,109
Ditto - - ditto 1884 - - - -	5,215		

ST. OLAVE'S UNION—*continued.*

IN-DOOR POOR.

Week.	Number of Persons Relieved Michaelmas Half-Year, 1891.						Number of Persons Relieved Lady Day Half-Year, 1892.							Number of Persons Relieved Michaelmas Half-Year, 1892.					
	Not Able-Bodied.		Able-Bodied.		Children.	Total.	Week.	Not Able-Bodied.		Able-Bodied.		Children.	Total.	Week.	Not Able-Bodied.		Able-Bodied.		Children.	Total.
	Men.	Women.	Men.	Women.				Men.	Women.	Men	Women.				Men.	Women.	Men.	Women.		
1st -	460	378	197	114	72	1,221	1st -	389	355	154	104	57	1,059	1st -	417	359	229	117	60	1,182
2nd -	466	387	201	115	67	1,236	2nd -	390	347	164	116	57	1,074	2nd -	466	387	201	115	67	1,236
3rd -	463	380	187	108	60	1,198	3rd -	393	351	175	115	57	1,091	3rd -	409	356	231	117	80	1,193
4th -	449	375	179	117	59	1,179	4th -	396	350	179	112	53	1,090	4th -	407	354	233	122	67	1,183
5th -	452	371	176	114	59	1,172	5th -	395	356	187	118	52	1,108	5th -	398	347	241	129	67	1,182
6th -	439	372	167	109	50	1,137	6th -	392	351	183	112	47	1,085	6th -	396	344	247	125	53	1,165
7th -	427	362	165	115	59	1,128	7th -	389	349	197	120	55	1,110	7th -	391	346	233	122	61	1,153
8th -	428	362	175	113	52	1,130	8th -	387	346	210	129	47	1,119	8th -	379	353	239	123	73	1,167
9th -	454	373	228	119	65	1,239	9th -	404	346	207	138	54	1,149	9th -	371	356	241	122	62	1,152
10th -	425	357	154	104	66	1,106	10th -	430	355	193	124	38	1,140	10th -	372	340	215	124	60	1,111
11th -	429	355	147	100	81	1,112	11th -	431	351	204	126	48	1,160	11th -	373	345	217	125	78	1,138
12th -	419	351	140	96	55	1,061	12th -	429	351	214	124	50	1,168	12th -	363	332	223	132	77	1,127
13th -	423	343	131	95	66	1,058	13th -	433	360	222	127	46	1,188	13th -	361	332	227	134	69	1,123
14th -	415	348	114	94	69	1,040	14th -	442	359	230	132	44	1,207	14th -	361	329	227	129	65	1,111
15th -	412	366	143	119	64	1,104	15th -	446	362	241	137	52	1,238	15th -	347	322	234	136	72	1,111
16th -	418	346	123	95	71	1,053	16th -	447	358	253	145	67	1,270	16th -	351	321	234	139	66	1,111
17th -	408	343	130	93	70	1,044	17th -	454	355	267	157	55	1,288	17th -	359	322	237	142	71	1,131
18th -	403	370	128	116	64	1,081	18th -	446	356	263	151	57	1,273	18th -	359	322	237	142	71	1,131
19th -	407	343	121	100	66	1,037	19th -	430	359	253	152	44	1,238	19th -	345	313	229	146	71	1,104
20th -	407	340	121	100	65	1,033	20th -	432	354	255	155	50	1,246	20th -	352	317	229	148	67	1,113
21st -	405	344	132	103	88	1,072	21st -	432	355	238	131	44	1,200	21st -	352	317	230	149	72	1,120
22nd -	400	348	135	102	73	1,058	22nd -	436	361	236	130	47	1,210	22nd -	345	318	223	137	64	1,087
23rd -	400	348	129	95	69	1,041	23rd -	436	358	237	130	44	1,205	23rd -	346	313	223	141	69	1,092
24th -	397	353	124	92	71	1,037	24th -	432	357	233	123	47	1,192	24th -	342	317	218	139	67	1,083
25th -	390	349	137	92	69	1,037	25th -	430	359	234	124	47	1,194	25th -	349	317	214	144	85	1,109
26th -	391	352	141	97	58	1,039	26th -	—	—	—	—	—	—	26th -	352	318	208	146	76	1,100
27th -	384	351	145	99	55	1,034	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	27th -	359	321	212	139	75	1,106

ST. OLAVE'S UNION—*continued.*

IN-DOOR POOR.

Number of Persons Relieved Lady-Day Half-Year, 1893.						
Week.	Not Able-Bodied.		Able-Bodied.		Children.	TOTAL.
	Men.	Women.	Men.	Women.		
1st	367	327	227	142	63	1,126
2nd	374	325	220	152	73	1,144
3rd	361	324	240	155	69	1,149
4th	365	335	244	157	76	1,177
5th	372	334	235	160	76	1,177
6th	378	339	235	163	79	1,194
7th	378	341	237	165	94	1,215
8th	384	343	248	166	87	1,228
9th	385	344	259	163	101	1,252
10th	390	347	275	167	102	1,281
11th	387	349	274	162	103	1,275
12th	387	347	268	163	96	1,261
13th	393	352	289	177	101	1,312
14th	395	352	288	181	103	1,319
15th	400	353	309	181	109	1,352
16th	395	349	313	179	102	1,338
17th	394	356	313	170	113	1,346
18th	391	356	299	167	100	1,313
19th	394	355	299	170	101	1,319
20th	382	355	296	169	72	1,274
21st	381	352	292	161	81	1,267
22nd	375	355	296	166	65	1,257
23rd	373	356	279	169	77	1,254
24th	363	362	278	158	65	1,226
25th	371	360	282	160	74	1,247
26th	365	352	278	161	67	1,223
—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Number of Persons Relieved Michaelmas Half-Year, 1893.						
Week.	Not Able-Bodied.		Able-Bodied.		Children.	TOTAL.
	Men	Women.	Men.	Women.		
1st	370	358	272	160	77	1,237
2nd	370	358	272	160	77	1,237
3rd	377	351	282	163	66	1,239
4th	371	348	168	164	65	1,216
5th	366	345	157	160	60	1,188
6th	364	341	259	162	74	1,200
7th	359	340	249	155	78	1,181
8th	362	343	247	151	78	1,181
9th	365	343	231	152	69	1,160
10th	367	345	222	153	76	1,163
11th	365	346	222	150	69	1,152
12th	369	353	223	148	80	1,173
13th	364	345	226	147	70	1,152
14th	361	349	337	146	67	1,160
15th	363	349	241	149	71	1,173
16th	364	351	238	149	73	1,175
17th	361	348	240	148	78	1,175
18th	357	353	240	141	77	1,168
19th	348	350	227	140	82	1,147
20th	342	351	222	139	72	1,126
21st	343	355	215	142	75	1,130
22nd	346	354	211	139	63	1,113
23rd	352	352	224	142	70	1,140
24th	356	351	224	143	70	1,144
25th	352	347	219	145	73	1,136
26th	362	347	234	146	75	1,164
27th	363	348	244	148	83	1,186

Number of Persons Relieved Lady-Day Half-Year, 1894.						
Week.	Not Able-Bodied.		Able-Bodied.		Children.	TOTAL.
	Men.	Women.	Men.	Women.		
1st	431	362	198	146	83	1,220
2nd	434	363	200	144	92	1,233
3rd	435	367	206	150	82	1,240
4th	435	370	211	157	103	1,276
5th	437	371	222	161	82	1,273
6th	442	377	235	64	102	1,320
7th	447	380	235	163	82	1,307
8th	448	380	342	159	88	1,317
9th	452	377	253	155	81	1,318
10th	449	380	259	156	95	1,339
11th	445	386	264	159	87	1,341
12th	443	381	265	165	105	1,359
13th	442	383	270	169	99	1,363
14th	438	387	290	174	97	1,386
15th	430	400	283	179	98	1,390
16th	431	402	281	178	105	1,397
17th	433	404	286	170	97	1,390
18th	433	399	287	172	95	1,386
19th	427	396	285	175	100	1,383
20th	424	402	280	169	89	1,364
21st	423	398	286	170	86	1,363
22nd	416	398	280	173	85	1,352
23rd	415	404	278	180	84	1,361
24th	407	406	266	177	85	1,341
25th	402	402	271	170	84	1,329
26th	402	401	256	171	85	1,315
—	—	—	—	—	—	—

IN-DOOR POOR.

Week.	Number of Persons relieved Michaelmas Half-Year, 1894.					
	Not Able-Bodied.		Able-Bodied.		Children.	Total.
	Men.	Women.	Men.	Women.		
1st	397	403	255	176	92	1,323
2nd	401	404	244	162	88	1,299
3rd	405	399	243	168	85	1,300
4th	397	395	234	166	86	1,278
5th	400	396	238	165	84	1,283
6th	395	394	238	164	71	1,262
7th	400	392	238	162	78	1,270
8th	401	394	241	154	85	1,275
9th	397	398	235	154	91	1,275
10th	395	399	220	152	93	1,259
11th	390	394	222	153	109	1,268
12th	391	389	223	149	102	1,254
13th	386	388	230	142	107	1,253
14th	384	387	230	144	111	1,256
15th	385	382	232	148	126	1,283
16th	398	391	224	148	116	1,277
17th	406	395	211	147	118	1,277
18th	411	396	195	147	97	1,246
19th	414	398	181	144	100	1,237
20th	415	406	180	143	82	1,226
21st	417	410	190	142	94	1,253
22nd	415	415	181	144	90	1,245
23rd	419	420	136	140	99	1,264
24th	412	428	186	136	87	1,249
25th	409	431	196	136	83	1,255
26th	403	422	197	136	76	1,234

Week.	Number of Persons relieved Lady-Day Half-Year, 1895.					
	Not Able-Bodied.		Able-Bodied.		Children.	Total.
	Men.	Women.	Men.	Women.		
1st	404	424	205	138	80	1,251
2nd	403	424	210	130	83	1,250
3rd	403	434	219	136	100	1,292
4th	405	428	229	147	100	1,309
5th	408	426	228	152	90	1,304
6th	412	423	231	147	82	1,295
7th	415	418	237	153	85	1,308
8th	416	425	250	153	90	1,334
9th	418	426	259	155	87	1,345
10th	418	431	266	153	74	1,342
11th	425	437	275	152	82	1,371
12th	423	440	276	148	86	1,373
13th	426	440	281	149	90	1,386
14th	435	448	290	148	80	1,401
15th	446	447	293	157	95	1,438
16th	443	451	293	157	79	1,423
17th	438	456	295	156	84	1,429
18th	443	453	304	163	89	1,452
19th	447	451	308	169	87	1,462
20th	451	449	329	163	89	1,481

ST. OLAVE'S UNION—*continued.*

VAGRANTS RELIEVED on the Night of Friday.

Date.	Men.	Women.	Children.	TOTAL.	Date.	Men.	Women.	Children.	TOTAL.
3 April 1891 -	7	–	–	7	1 April 1892 -	11	–	–	11
10 „ „ -	7	–	–	7	8 „ „ -	11	1	–	12
17 „ „ -	7	–	–	7	15 „ „ -	8	–	–	8
24 „ „ -	10	–	–	10	22 „ „ -	17	1	–	18
1 May „ -	13	–	–	13	29 „ „ -	23	–	–	23
8 „ „ -	10	1	–	11	6 May „ -	27	–	–	27
15 „ „ -	11	–	–	11	13 „ „ -	20	–	–	20
22 „ „ -	17	–	–	17	20 „ „ -	10	1	–	11
29 „ „ -	12	1	–	13	27 „ „ -	6	1	–	7
5 June „ -	5	1	–	6	3 June „ -	12	2	–	14
12 „ „ -	10	–	–	10	10 „ „ -	18	4	2	24
19 „ „ -	9	1	1	11	17 „ „ -	14	–	–	14
26 „ „ -	3	1	–	4	24 „ „ -	12	1	–	13
3 July „ -	8	–	–	8	1 July „ -	11	1	–	12
10 „ „ -	9	1	–	10	8 „ „ -	17	–	–	17
17 „ „ -	9	–	–	9	15 „ „ -	14	1	–	15
24 „ „ -	7	–	–	7	22 „ „ -	14	1	–	15
31 „ „ -	12	–	–	12	29 „ „ -	12	4	1	17
7 Aug. „ -	12	–	–	12	5 Aug. „	16	–	–	16
14 „ „ -	8	2	–	10	12 „ „ -	14	2	–	16
21 „ „ -	16	2	–	18	19 „ „ -	13	1	–	14
28 „ „ -	10	–	–	10	26 „ „ -	2	1	–	3
4 Sept. „ -	10	–	–	10	2 Sept. „ -	7	–	–	7
11 „ „ -	6	–	–	6	9 „ „ -	14	1	–	15
18 „ „ -	12	2	–	14	16 „ „ -	14	1	2	17
25 „ „ -	6	–	–	6	23 „ „ -	25	1	–	26
2 Oct. „ -	13	–	–	13	30 „ „ -	30	–	–	30
9 „ „ -	22	1	–	23	7 Oct. „ „	38	1	–	39
16 „ „ -	26	2	–	28	14 „ „ -	34	1	1	36
23 „ „ -	21	–	–	21	21 „ „ -	38	–	–	38
30 „ „ -	32	1	2	35	28 „ „ -	32	–	–	32
6 Nov. „ -	17	3	–	20	4 Nov. „ -	28	–	–	28
13 „ „ -	26	1	–	27	18 „ „ -	32	–	–	32
20 „ „ -	23	1	–	24	25 „ „ -	27	–	–	27
27 „ „ -	22	1	–	23	2 Dec. „ -	28	–	–	28
4 Dec. „ -	26	–	–	26	9 „ „ -	38	–	–	38
11 „ „ -	22	–	–	22	16 „ „ -	20	–	–	20
18 „ „ -	26	–	–	26	23 „ „ -	15	–	–	15
25 „ „ -	13	–	–	13	30 „ „ -	38	1	–	39
1 Jan. 1892 -	14	–	–	14	6 Jan. 1893 -	22	–	–	22
8 „ „ -	24	–	–	24	13 „ „ -	21	–	–	21
15 „ „ -	15	1	–	16	20 „ „ -	28	–	–	28
22 „ „ -	23	1	–	24	27 „ „ -	11	–	–	11
29 „ „ -	9	–	–	9	3 Feb. „ -	19	–	–	19
5 Feb. „ -	14	–	–	14	10 „ „ -	7	1	–	8
12 „ „ -	18	1	–	19	17 „ „ -	25	–	–	25
19 „ „ -	24	–	–	24	24 „ „ -	28	2	–	30
26 „ „ -	28	–	–	28	3 Mar. „ -	14	1	–	15
4 Mar. „ -	28	1	–	29	10 „ „ -	18	–	–	18
11 „ „ -	29	–	–	29	17 „ „ -	3	–	–	3
18 „ „ -	17	–	–	17	24 „ „ -	4	–	–	4
25 „ „ -	25	–	–	25	31 „ „ -	5	–	–	5

ST. OLAVE'S UNION—*continued.*

VAGRANTS Relieved on the Night of Friday—*continued.*

Date.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.
7 April 1893 -	24	1	–	25
14 „ „ -	16	–	–	16
21 „ „ -	11	–	–	11
28 „ „ -	13	1	–	14
5 May „ -	13	–	–	13
12 „ „ -	20	1	–	21
19 „ „ -	13	–	–	13
26 „ „ -	20	1	–	21
2 June „ -	13	4	–	17
9 „ „ -	23	1	–	24
16 „ „ -	10	–	1	11
23 „ „ -	17	–	–	17
30 „ „ -	16	–	–	16
7 July „ -	10	1	–	11
14 „ „ -	26	1	–	27
28 „ „ -	11	1	–	12
4 Aug. „ -	25	1	–	26
11 „ „ -	13	–	–	13
18 „ „ -	13	1	–	14
25 „ „ -	10	1	–	11
1 Sept. „ -	14	–	–	14
8 „ „ -	14	–	–	14
15 „ „ -	16	–	–	16
22 „ „ -	37	1	4	42
29 „ „ -	33	2	–	35
6 Oct. „ -	22	1	–	23
13 „ „ -	30	1	1	32
20 „ „ -	20	–	–	20
27 „ „ -	20	2	–	22
3 Nov. „ -	30	1	–	31
10 „ „ -	30	1	–	31
17 „ „ -	25	–	–	25
24 „ „ -	24	–	–	24
1 Dec. „ -	34	1	–	35
8 „ „ -	16	1	1	18
15 „ „ -	23	–	–	23
22 „ „ -	23	1	–	24
29 „ „ -	27	–	–	27
5 Jan. 1894 -	23	–	–	23
12 „ „ -	32	1	–	33
19 „ „ -	21	–	–	21
26 „ „ -	32	–	–	32
2 Feb. „ -	34	2	–	36
9 „ „ -	30	2	–	32
16 „ „ -	29	–	1	30
23 „ „ -	37	–	–	37
2 Mar. „ -	24	1	–	25
9 „ „ -	25	2	–	27

Date.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.
16 Mar. 1894 -	28	–	–	28
23 „ „ -	21	1	–	22
30 „ „ -	18	1	–	19
6 April „ -	24	2	–	26
13 „ „ -	22	–	–	22
20 „ „ -	26	1	–	27
27 „ „ -	15	1	–	16
4 May „ -	54	2	–	56
11 „ „ -	19	2	–	21
18 „ „ -	24	–	–	24
25 „ „ -	26	2	–	28
1 June „ -	31	3	–	34
8 „ „ -	21	4	–	25
15 „ „ -	10	3	–	13
22 „ „ -	16	2	–	18
29 „ „ -	13	–	–	13
6 July „ -	9	–	–	9
13 „ „ -	13	2	–	15
20 „ „ -	14	1	–	15
27 „ „ -	8	1	–	9
3 Aug. „ -	13	2	–	15
10 „ „ -	20	4	–	24
17 „ „ -	Wards closed for repairs, &c.			–
24 „ „ -	- ditto -	ditto.		–
31 „ „ -	- ditto -	ditto.		–
7 Sept. „ -	- ditto -	ditto.		–
14 „ „ -	10	–	–	10
21 „ „ -	22	–	–	22
28 „ „ -	13	–	–	13
5 Oct. „ -	13	2	–	15
12 „ „ -	23	4	–	27
19 „ „ -	28	3	–	31
26 „ „ -	26	2	–	28
2 Nov. „ -	31	5	1	37
9 „ „ -	29	1	–	30
16 „ „ -	37	2	–	39
23 „ „ -	28	2	1	31
30 „ „ -	28	–	–	28
7 Dec. „ -	35	1	–	36
14 „ „ -	33	–	–	33
21 „ „ -	13	–	–	13
28 „ „ -	26	–	–	26
4 Jan. 1895 -	22	–	–	22
11 „ „ -	31	–	–	31
18 „ „ -	17	–	–	17
25 „ „ -	24	–	–	24
1 Feb. „ -	26	2	–	28
8 „ „ -	23	1	–	24
15 „ „ -	30	4	–	34

ST. OLAVE'S UNION—*continued.*

RETURN AS TO RATES.

PARISH.	Year ended Lady-Day, 1892.			Year ended Lady-Day, 1893.			Year ended Lady-Day, 1894.			Year ended Lady-Day, 1895.			Average.		
	Poor Rate.	General Rate.	TOTAL.	Poor Rate.	General Rate.	TOTAL.	Poor Rate.	General Rate.	TOTAL.	Poor Rate.	General Rate.	TOTAL.	Poor Rate.	General Rate.	TOTAL.
	s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
St. John	3 3	2 2	5 5	4 1	2 3	6 4	4 –	2 4	6 4	3 10	2 2	6 –	3 9	2 3	6 –
St. Olave	3 3	2 4	5 7	4 –	2 4	6 4	3 5	2 3	5 8	4 –	2 4	6 4	3 8	2 3	5 11
St. Thomas	3 5	2 2	5 7	4 –	2 2	6 2	3 8	2 1½	5 9½	4 –	2 1	6 1	3 9	2 1	5 10
Bermondsey	3 6	2 9	6 3	3 8	3 2	6 10	4 4	3 2	7 6	3 10	2 11	6 9	3 10	3 –	6 10
Rotherhithe	3 7	2 7	6 2	4 3	2 7	6 10	4 5	3 –	7 5	4 –	3 –	7 –	4 1	2 9	6 10

ST. OLAVE'S UNION—*continued.*

NUMBER of MEN employed by the Bermondsey Vestry on the recent Snowfalls.

13 January 1895	196	30 January 1895	105
22 „ „	324	31 „ „	71
23 „ „	240	1 February „	358
28 „ „	368	2 „ „	268
29 „ „	159	TOTAL	2,089

OUT-DOOR LABOUR YARDS.

Additional Staff in consequence of Opening of.

Relieving Officers	4
Assistant Relieving Officers	26
Labour Superintendents	37
Clerks	7
Gate Keepers	1
Carpenters (handy men)	11
Storekeeper	1
TOTAL	87

ST. OLAVE'S UNION—*continued.*

STATEMENT of the Number of each class of IN-DOOR PAUPERS

DATE.	Able-bodied and their Families (exclusive of Vagrants).									
	Adults.								Children under 16, of Able-bodied Inmates.	
	Married Couples.				Other Males.		Other Females.			
	Males.		Females.						Illegitimate.	Other Children.
	In Health.	Temporarily Disabled.	In Health.	Temporarily Disabled.	In Health.	Temporarily Disabled.	In Health.	Temporarily Disabled.		
	1.		2.		3.		4.		5.	6.
1 January 1884	1	–	1	–	14		51		11	95
1 „ 1885	–	–	–	–	27		34		6	35
1 „ 1886	–	–	–	–	12		43		14	27
1 „ 1887	1	–	1	–	4		40		17	18
1 „ 1888	–	–	–	–	–	–	39		10	12
1 „ 1889	–	–	–	–	–	–	36		9	14
1 „ 1890	–	–	–	–	–	–	20		9	12
„ 1891	–	–	–	–			20	–	7	19
1 „ 1892	–	–	–	–	25	197	22	112	6	11
1 „ 1893	–	–	–	–	22	279	43	135	11	38
1 „ 1894	2	–	2	–	31	253	48	139	5	47
1 „ 1895	1	–	1	–	38	253	53	111	16	61

STATEMENT of the Number of each class of IN-DOOR PAUPERS

DATE.	Able-bodied and their Families (exclusive of Vagrants).									
	Adults.								Children under 16, of Able-bodied Inmates.	
	Married Couples.				Other Males.		Other Females.			
	Males.		Females.						Illegitimate.	Other Children.
	In Health.	Temporarily Disabled.	In Health.	Temporarily Disabled.	In Health.	Temporarily Disabled.	In Health.	Temporarily Disabled.		
	1.		2.		3.		4.		5.	6.
1 July 1884	–	–	–	–	14		38		4	98
1 „ 1885	–	–	–	–	17		38		9	33
1 „ 1886	–	–	–	–	1		23		7	34
1 „ 1887	1	–	1	–	–		40		16	29
1 „ 1888	–	–	–	–	–	–	35		10	12
1 „ 1889	–	–	–	–	–	–	26		4	13
1 „ 1890	–	–	–	–	–	–	16		7	7
1 „ 1891	–	–	–	–	9	–	11	4	4	12
1 „ 1892	–	–	–	–	8	220	32	91	5	11
1 „ 1893	–	–	–	–	19	185	35	113	8	30
1 „ 1894	–	–	–	–	15	204	40	105	7	44

St. OLAVE'S UNION—*continued.*

relieved on the 1st of January from the Year 1884 to 1895.

Not Able-bodied and their Families (exclusive of Vagrants).							Lunatics, Insane Persons, and Idiots.			Totals.			Totals.
Adults.				Children under 16.									
Married Couples.		Other Males.	Other Females.	Of Parents (not Able-bodied), being Inmates.		Orphans or other Children relieved without their Parents.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Adults.		Children under 16.	
Males.	Females.			Illegitimate.	Other Children.					Males.	Females.		
7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.				
3	3	493	444	7	57	633	64	107	14	575	606	867	2,048
10	10	507	436	6	29	737	70	97	18	614	577	831	2,022
6	6	440	426	3	12	741	63	89	15	521	564	812	1,897
6	6	459	429	3	16	751	61	88	13	531	564	818	1,913
9	9	508	450	2	13	741	57	81	13	574	579	791	1,944
13	13	508	446	5	14	682	55	81	14	576	576	738	1,890
12	12	627	484	6	16	674	68	106	14	707	622	731	2,060
7	7	659	472	3	28	720	80	118	16	746	617	793	2,156
11	11	425	345	3	26	753	82	129	13	740	619	812	2,171
12	12	379	338	–	35	802	88	106	21	780	634	907	2,321
13	13	433	368	7	50	825	83	103	21	815	676	955	2,446
22	22	420	422	5	49	841	72	110	23	806	719	995	2,520

relieved on the 1st of July from the Year 1884 to 1894.

Not Able-bodied and their Families (exclusive of Vagrants).							Lunatics, Insane Persons, and Idiots.			Totals.			Totals.
Adults.				Children under 16.									
Married Couples.		Other Males.	Other Females.	Of Parents (not Able-bodied), being Inmates.		Orphans or other Children relieved without their Parents.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Adults.		Children under 16.	
Males.	Females.			Illegitimate.	Other Children.					Males.	Females.		
7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.				
5	5	470	434	8	53	674	63	99	18	552	576	855	1,983
7	7	427	424	6	24	751	66	91	12	517	560	835	1,912
6	6	390	420	–	10	744	64	90	9	461	539	804	1,804
10	10	436	431	4	16	732	60	82	11	507	564	808	1,879
9	9	434	433	2	14	685	60	80	8	503	557	731	1,791
15	15	459	434	3	26	671	54	81	15	528	556	732	1,816
6	6	553	470	9	45	688	72	114	17	631	606	773	2,010
9	9	546	430	5	21	667	78	112	26	642	666	735	1,943
11	11	351	325	4	25	764	86	107	22	676	566	831	2,073
13	13	414	334	2	40	804	83	105	21	714	600	905	2,219
12	12	397	382	4	39	788	79	110	21	707	649	898	2,254

ST. OLAVE'S UNION—*continued.*

STATEMENT of Number of each class of OUT-DOOR PAUPERS

DATE.	Statistical Portion.												
	Able-bodied, or the Families of Able-bodied.												
	Adult Males (Married or Single) relieved in Cases of Sudden and Urgent Necessity.	Adult Males (Married or Single) relieved in Cases of their own Sickness, Accident, or Infirmity.	Adult Males relieved on account of Sickness, Accident, or Infirmity of any of the Family, or of a Funeral.	Adult Males (Married or Single) relieved on account of want of Work or other Causes.	Families of Adult Males in Columns 1, 2, 3, and 4, resident with the Father.		Widows.	Children under 16, dependent on Widows.	Single Women without Children.	Illegitimate Children, and their Mother.		Families relieved on account of Parent being in Gaol, &c.	
					Wife.	Children under 16.				Mother.	Children.	Wives.	Children.
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.
1 January 1884	1	29	6	–	38	79	126	296	5	–	–	4	10
1 „ 1885	–	20	6	3	33	70	89	203	10	–	–	9	30
1 „ 1886	–	45	8	6	56	150	133	295	14	3	3	4	11
1 „ 1887	–	41	23	2	52	89	150	353	14	1	–	15	52
1 „ 1888	1	91	32	53	136	254	186	420	10	3	7	4	26
1 „ 1889	12	68	16	8	73	148	202	482	9	–	–	23	67
1 „ 1890	1	94	10	2	101	196	212	537	10	1	1	17	56
1 „ 1891	1	82	24	3	100	194	216	579	9	1	4	22	65
1 „ 1892	–	89	23	7	97	230	257	706	25	1	2	27	80
1 „ 1893	–	118	34	37	147	221	294	744	10	–	–	23	69
1 „ 1894	–	88	30	23	110	263	243	655	18	1	2	16	42
1 „ 1895	1	73	45	15	99	187	236	656	10	1	2	8	24

STATEMENT of Number of each class of OUT-DOOR PAUPERS

DATE.	Statistical Portion.												
	Able-bodied, or the Families of Able-bodied.												
	Adult Males (Married or Single) relieved in Cases of Sudden and Urgent Necessity.	Adult Males (Married or Single) relieved in Cases of their own Sickness, Accident, or Infirmity.	Adult Males relieved on account of Sickness, Accident, or Infirmity of any of the Family, or of a Funeral.	Adult Males (Married or Single) relieved on account of want of Work or other Causes.	Families of Adult Males in Columns 1, 2, 3, and 4, resident with the Father.		Widows.	Children under 16, dependent on Widows.	Single Women without Children.	Illegitimate Children and their Mother.		Families relieved on account of Parent being in Gaol, &c.	
					Wife.	Children under 16.				Mother.	Children.	Wives.	Children.
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.
1 July 1884	11	21	3	–	29	68	117	306	6	–	–	8	23
1 „ 1885	5	36	1	10	42	90	118	260	12	1	–	4	11
1 „ 1886	–	52	11	17	67	132	170	313	15	1	2	4	9
1 „ 1887	–	43	11	27	82	145	142	373	9	–	2	7	21
1 „ 1888	1	60	6	2	60	141	171	454	10	1	2	16	58
1 „ 1889	1	55	8	4	54	141	205	544	12	–	–	21	81
1 „ 1890	2	69	14	8	73	184	257	584	18	–	–	18	56
1 „ 1891	–	103	23	3	98	228	234	620	13	4	4	19	63
1 „ 1892	–	90	27	38	132	313	292	721	23	2	3	22	49
1 „ 1893	–	98	12	5	87	171	290	677	10	–	–	15	48
1 „ 1894	–	65	31	18	85	168	246	594	9	1	2	16	65

ST. OLAVE'S UNION—*continued.*

relieved on the 1st of January from the Year 1884 to 1895.

STATISTICAL PORTION.

Families of Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines relieved.		Resident Families or other Non-resident Males relieved.		Not Able-bodied.				Lunatics, Insane Persons, and Idiots.			Totals.			
Wives.	Children.	Wives.	Children.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16 relieved with Parents.	Orphans or other Children under 16 relieved without their Parents.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Males.	Females.	Children.	Total.
14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.	28.
–	–	11	26	84	460	19	10	142	187	1	262	831	441	1,534
2	6	17	47	71	413	18	3	144	211	–	244	784	377	1,405
4	9	18	41	101	466	13	6	151	208	–	311	906	528	1,745
–	–	17	59	106	570	12	9	159	210	1	331	1,029	575	1,935
–	–	23	68	133	585	19	10	163	229	–	473	1,176	804	2,453
–	–	21	58	155	697	10	9	179	251	–	438	1,276	774	2,488
–	–	31	98	175	738	23	5	166	242	–	448	1,352	916	2,716
–	–	23	81	200	884	18	5	140	212	1	450	1,469	945	2,864
1	5	28	98	196	915	39	14	152	219	–	467	1,570	1,174	3,211
–	–	21	59	215	1,044	10	10	148	212	1	552	1,751	1,114	3,417
–	–	27	82	220	1,010	25	12	166	219	–	527	1,644	1,081	3,252
–	–	21	61	259	1,053	16	13	180	214	–	573	1,642	959	3,174

relieved on the 1st of July from the Year 1884 to 1894.

STATISTICAL PORTION.

Families of Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines relieved.		Resident Families or other Non-resident Males relieved.		Not Able-bodied.				Lunatics, Insane Persons, and Idiots.			Totals.			
Wives.	Children.	Wives.	Children.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16 relieved with Parents.	Orphans or other Children under 16 relieved without their Parents.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Males.	Females.	Children.	Total.
14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.	28.
–	–	25	35	88	456	15	4	155	199	3	278	840	454	1,571
4	8	16	47	86	454	15	5	151	203	–	289	854	436	1,579
1	3	23	64	103	507	13	11	148	212	–	331	1,000	547	1,878
2	2	12	43	118	540	7	19	164	225	1	363	1,019	613	1,995
1	3	24	62	129	612	5	4	168	244	–	366	1,139	729	2,234
2	6	15	42	162	707	20	5	185	248	–	415	1,264	839	2,518
3	7	31	102	178	810	16	10	154	219	–	425	1,429	959	2,813
3	4	30	90	202	878	30	9	140	222	–	471	1,501	1,048	3,020
–	–	29	84	199	927	29	11	143	215	–	497	1,642	1,210	3,349
5	17	28	86	213	1,062	40	11	154	211	–	432	1,648	1,060	3,180
1	6	22	68	210	1,017	19	10	171	219	–	495	1,616	932	3,043

ST. OLAVE'S UNION.

REGULATIONS for the Administration of Out-Door Relief for the Guidance of Guardians and Officers.

General.

1. That it is desirable to substitute as far as practicable in-door for out-door relief to all classes of able-bodied poor, whether relief be required on account of sickness, or by alleged want of employment; and that it is absolutely essential that the relief committees should act upon some well-defined and uniform system.

2. That out-door relief shall be granted in those cases only in which, in the opinion of the relief committee, it is required by exceptional circumstances.

3. That out-door relief shall be regarded as an indulgence to be granted in certain instances to persons of proved respectability, whose destitution has arisen from no fault of their own.

4. That the characters of applicants for out-door relief shall be rigorously investigated, especially as regard sobriety and provident habits, and persons whose destitution is found to be the result of intemperance and improvidence shall only be relieved, with their families (if any), in the workhouse.

5. That applicants for relief shall be required to satisfy the guardians that, when they were able to work they made every reasonable effort, by thrift and economy, to provide against times of sickness and adversity. Should the applicants fail to make this clear, out-door relief to be refused, and they, with their families (if any), to be relieved only in the workhouse.

Operation of Rules.

6. That the foregoing rules (excepting those relating to able-bodied poor and to the duties of the relieving officers) need not necessarily be applied to the present recipients of out-door relief, but they shall be strictly enforced in the cases of all future applicants.

Reference to Local Charities.

7. That in all cases where there appears a reasonable prospect that the cause of distress can be removed by charitable efforts, applicants be referred by the relieving officer to a suitable charity without delay.

Relief from Charitable Societies.

8. That out-door relief shall not be in supplementation of relief from charitable societies, but shall be, in itself, adequate for the necessities of the applicant, who shall be required to desist from drawing relief from any charitable societies; such term "Charitable Societies" not to be taken to include a clergyman or minister of any denomination who distributes the funds entrusted to him by his congregation.

Classes excluded from receiving Out-door Relief.

9. That out-door relief shall not be granted or allowed to applicants of any of the following classes:—

1. Married, able-bodied men.

2. Single, able-bodied men.

3. Single, able-bodied women (with or without an illegitimate child or children).

4. Any woman with an illegitimate child.

5. Able-bodied widows with not more than two children. (An exception may be made during the first three months of widowhood).

6. Able-bodied widows without children.

7. Married women (with or without families), deserted by their husbands.

8. Married women (with or without families), shall not be relieved apart from their husbands.

9. Married women (with or without families), left destitute through their husbands being called up for training in the militia or serving in the army or navy.

10. Married women (with not more than two children), whose husbands are undergoing a term of imprisonment.

11. Women who, during the 12 months prior to application, have become widows, and who, on the death of their husbands, have received money from a club, insurance society, or other sources which, in the opinion of the relief committee, has been lavishly spent in mourning or funeral expenses or has been otherwise improperly expended (reasonable expenses on a funeral shall be considered to be not more than 3*l.* 10*s.*)

12. Widows whose children have been admitted to the district or a certified school.

13. Persons residing with relatives where the united income of the family is sufficient for the support of all its members, whether such relatives are liable by law to support the applicant or not.

14. Persons having relatives who, in the opinion of the relief committee, are capable of maintaining them.

15. Aged persons who cannot satisfy the relief committee, that if assisted by out-door relief their means will be adequate to their support.

16. Destitute undeserving persons.

17. Persons who are intemperate or who are known to be in the habit of frequenting public-houses, begging in the streets, or of drunken or immoral habits.

18. Persons living in premises reported to be overcrowded, or in a filthy or insanitary condition.

19. Persons who make false statements to the relieving officers or the relief committee.

20. Persons residing in furnished lodgings.

21. Persons who fail to satisfy the relief committee that their destitution has not been caused by improvidence or intemperance.

22. Persons not residing within the union.

23. In

23. In cases where the district medical officer expresses a distinct or decided opinion that the case would be best dealt with in the infirmary.

Note.—The above regulations shall not be imperative in the following cases :—

1. The case of a person receiving relief on account of sudden or urgent necessity.

2. The case of a person receiving relief on account of any sickness, accident, or bodily or mental infirmity affecting such person or any of his or her family.

Maintenance by Relatives.

10. That on every application for relief enquiry shall be made if the person applying has any property or income whatever, or relations of sufficient ability who are legally liable to contribute to his or her support.

11. That the provisions with respect to the compulsory maintenance of paupers by relatives legally liable to contribute to their support shall be carefully acted upon, and that where an applicant has sons or unmarried daughters who do not contribute to his or her maintenance, such sons or unmarried daughters shall be required to attend before the relief committee, and, if expedient, an order shall be made by the committee on each to contribute.

12. That rewards be offered for the apprehension of men leaving their wives and families chargeable to the union ; and that relatives legally liable be prosecuted in all cases where neglecting to maintain or contribute towards the support of paupers, whether they are resident or non-resident in the union.

Contributions from Pensions or Friendly Societies.

13. That in the cases of pensioners relieved out of the workhouse, where the relief equals or exceeds the amount of the pension, the guardians shall, if they see fit, claim such pension in repayment of the relief.

14. That in the cases of paupers who are in receipt of contributions from friendly societies, &c., such contributions shall be taken into account in fixing the amount of relief to be given.

Attendance of Applicants.

15. That in all cases where it is practicable to do so, applicants for out-door relief shall attend before the relief committees in person.

16. That where application is made for relief to be granted to any member of a family, the heads of the family shall be required to attend when practicable.

17. That in cases of non-attendance the relief committee must receive a satisfactory explanation.

Medical Relief.

18. That all orders for medical attendance or medical relief shall be given provisionally only by the relieving officer until the next meeting of the relief committee, except in cases where the applicant is already on the relief list. The relieving officer shall insert on each medical order for how many days it is available, and inform the recipient on visiting the case, which he must do before the next meeting of the committee, that if a renewal of the order is required, application must be made to the relief committee at the next meeting. Provided that it be an instruction to the district medical officer in all urgent cases to continue his attendance without a fresh order, and to make a special report thereof in his medical relief book, to be laid before the relief committee at such meeting.

19. That applications for and recipients of medical relief, other than those in receipt of out-door relief, shall be supplied by the relieving officers with the addresses of the local provident dispensaries.

20. That out-door relief shall not be granted on account of the sickness of the applicant or any of his or her family, for a longer period than two weeks at a time, unless such sickness shall be certified in writing by the district medical officer as likely to be of long duration, or of a permanent character.

Medical Extras and Orders for Infirmary.

21. That medical extras be supplied only in cases of emergency, and that such extras be not continued in any case which might with advantage be admitted to the infirmary.

22. That all recommendations from the medical officer for medical extras, as meat and milk, be accompanied by a written report from the relieving officer in the application and report book setting forth full particulars of each case, ascertained from personal inquiry.

23. That the district medical officers be required to make a list once a week of all persons to whom they have given orders of admission to the infirmary, the same to be handed to the relieving officer and to be laid before the relief committee at each meeting. The list to state the name in full, address, date of admission, and nature of complaint.

Midwifery Orders.

24. That midwifery orders shall not be granted by the relieving officers, except in urgent cases, without the consent of the relief committee given on personal application made to them, and in no case where the family consists of less than four children, and the father's weekly earnings exceed 18*s.*, unless by way of loan.

Relief by way of Loan.

25. That where relief is given to able-bodied persons on account of temporary illness, and also in any other cases where it may appear to the relief committee that the relief given to an applicant can be subsequently repaid, such relief shall be granted on loan. (4 & 5 Will. 4, c. 76, s. 58).

Period of Relief.

26. That out-door relief shall invariably be granted for a fixed period only, which shall not, in any case, exceed 14 weeks, and during the first eight weeks shall not be given for more than four weeks at a time. In the case of aged and infirm persons (not receiving relief on account of sickness), the period of relief may be 14 weeks, in all other cases the period shall not exceed four weeks.

27. That medical extras shall not be continued to any pauper for a longer period than 14 weeks, except by special consent of the relief committee.

Scale of Relief.

28. That the amount of relief granted to aged persons shall be according to individual circumstances.

29. That the amount of relief granted to women with children shall be, 1*s.* 4*d.* for each child weekly, with a similar allowance for the mother when there is an infant in arms or other circumstances preventing the mother from actively working. The relief given to be not less than half in kind.

30. That the amount of relief granted to cases of sickness shall be according to their necessity.

31. That in cases of aged or infirm or totally disabled men or women, the sum to be allowed for out-relief shall not in the case of one person exceed 3*s.* 6*d.* per week, or in the case of a man and wife under like circumstances, shall not exceed 5*s.* 6*d.* per week except by order of the guardians.

Visitation of Applicants for, and Recipients of Relief.

32. That in every case where the pauper does not attend in person to receive the relief ordered by the relief committee, the relieving officer shall be required to visit the home of the pauper as soon as possible, in order to ascertain the cause, and to take the relief with him, reporting the case at the next meeting of the relief committee if the cause be not satisfactory.

33. That the relieving officer shall, as a rule, visit at their homes, all able-bodied widows receiving out-door relief, and all persons chargeable on account of temporary sickness, at uncertain intervals (as far as practicable) at least once a month, and the old and infirm cases at least once in two months on an unexpected occasion. A record of each visit shall be duly noted in the application and report book for the information of the guardians when the pauper appears before them.

34. That out-door relief shall not be granted by the committee in any case, unless the relieving officer has, since the application, visited the home of the applicant, and has recorded the date of such visit, and all the particulars required by the form in the application and report book.

35. When out-door relief is considered necessary for any new applicant by the guardians, such relief shall be given for not more than four weeks, and one special visit at least shall be made by the relieving officer, at an uncertain hour, to the home of the pauper during such month.

Attendance of Children at School.

36. Out-door relief to persons with children shall be discontinued if the school attendances are imperfect, or the school fees are not paid.

Children to be admitted to School, preferably to giving Out-Door Relief to the Mother.

37. That in cases of able-bodied widows with more than two children dependent on them, one or more of the children may be admitted into the workhouse, and sent to the district or separate school in preference to giving out-door relief. In all such cases the widow shall, so long as her child or children remain chargeable to the union in the district or separate school, or in any other institution connected with the union, be visited at her home by the relieving officer of the district, or other officer of the union, at least every three months, and the result of his visit reported to the relief committee at the first meeting after each quarter day, in the book provided for that purpose, termed "officers' report upon relatives of children."

Contributions towards Interment Expenses.

38. That no contibutions be given towards the expense of interment of any pauper undertaken by friends, but that the interment be entirely conducted by the guardians.

Chairman to inform Applicants of Decision of Relief Committee.

39. That when relief is granted by the committee, the applicant to be informed by the chairman of the amount of relief granted, and the term of its continuance.

Decisions of Relief Committee.

40. That the decisions arrived at by the relief committees (the circumstances remaining the same) shall in every case be final.

41. That in all cases which have been brought before the relief committee and out-door relief has been refused, such cases shall not be re-adjudicated upon by the relief committee for 14 weeks after such decision, unless there has been some alteration in the circumstances.

Relatives, &c., of Applicants.

42. That the names, address, occupation, relatives, &c., of applicant, and earnings of every member of a household or family where out-door relief is applied for, shall be entered in the proper columns of the application and report book by the relieving officer.

Publication of Rules.

43. That copies of certain of the foregoing rules shall be printed and posted in the relief offices and waiting rooms, and complete copies printed and supplied to each of the relieving officers, medical officers, and annually, on their election, to each of the Guardians. Copies shall also be laid before the relief committees when sitting for the investigation of cases.

ST. OLAVE'S UNION.—February, 1893.

INDOOR ACCOMMODATION.

Memorandum by the Clerk.

Constitution of Union.

Under the provisions of the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1834 (4 and 5 William IV., c. 76, sec. 26), the St. Olave's Union consisted, on its original formation, of the three parishes of Saint Olave, Saint Thomas, and Saint John, which on the 1st February 1836 were united for the administration of the laws for the relief of the poor, by an Order of the Poor Law Commissioners, dated the 31st December 1835. In further exercise of the powers given by this Statute, the Poor Law Board, who succeeded the Poor Law Commissioners, issued an Order, dated the 27th August 1869, by which the separate parishes of St. Mary Magdalen, Bermondsey, and St. Mary, Rotherhithe, were, on the 1st October 1869, added to the St. Olave's Union (as constituted in 1835), and from that date the Union has comprised the five parishes of St. Olave, St. Thomas, St. John, Bermondsey, and Rotherhithe.

Tenure of Workhouse and Compensation.

Under the first-named Order, the respective workhouses of the parishes of St. Olave and St. John became convertible to the common use of the Union, as then constituted, and the guardians thereof were ordered and directed to pay half-yearly to the overseers of these two parishes an annual sum of 309*l.* and 206*l.* respectively, these amounts being relatively three-fifths of the sum of 515*l.* to St. Olave's parish and two-fifths of the same amount to St. John's parish. The overseers of these two parishes were ordered and directed to apply these half-yearly sums received from the said guardians in aid of the current rates for the relief of the said two parishes until the Poor Law Commissioners should by an order under their hands and seals of office otherwise order and direct, and these amounts have ever since been duly paid by the guardians.

Under the last-named Order of 27th August 1869, the workhouses which were in the possession of the parishes of Bermondsey and Rotherhithe, from the date of annexation on the 1st October following, likewise became convertible to the common use of the St. Olave's Union as enlarged.

Adjustment of Interests.

For the purpose of adjusting the interests of the parishes of the Union, as so combined, professional valuations of the two workhouses of Bermondsey and Rotherhithe were procured, and annual compensations in the nature of rent were fixed by Orders of the Poor Law Board, dated respectively the 19th October 1870, and the 14th August 1871, and payment was directed to be made by half-yearly instalments of the sum of 1,050*l.* per annum for the Bermondsey Workhouse and premises, and of the sum of 705*l.* per annum for the Rotherhithe Workhouse, Infirmary, land, and premises, to the churchwardens and overseers, or persons acting as such, for the parishes to which previously these two last-named workhouses distinctively belonged, and these amounts as they have become due have been duly discharged.

Acquisition of Parochial Offices and Yard.

Owing to the continued occupation of the yard adjoining the Tanner-street Workhouse being disputed, further parochial property came into the hands of the guardians. Legal proceedings against the churchwardens and overseers of Bermondsey were resorted to for recovering the possession of the yard in question, and, during the progress of the action, it was sought to include the right of the guardians to the use of the parochial offices, subject to the payment of an annual compensation. These offices were omitted from the special case, filed in the Exchequer Division of the High Court of Justice in 1880, and judgment was given to the effect that the yard was an appurtenance of the workhouse, and consequently the guardians obtained the right to occupy it therewith, free from the payment of any rent or compensation.

Eventually, by agreement, the parochial offices came into th eoccupation of the guardians, and, by an Order of the Local Government Board, dated the 14th May 1883, the parochial offices also became convertible to the common use of the Union from Christmas 1882 upon the payment of the sum of 60*l.* per annum, by half-yearly instalments to be appropriated towards a liquidation of the rates of the parish of Bermondsey, which is the same title as that upon which the workhouses are held. Upon the question of the tenures of all these parish properties, the Local Government Board (by Letter, dated the 11th April 1889) have, at the request of the guardians, expressed their opinion that it seems to them, if the guardians were to provide adequate workhouse accommodation elsewhere, it would be competent, with the consent of that Board, to abandon the occupation of the Parish-street and Tanner-street Workhouses.

Synopsis of Annual Compensations.

The annual compensations are recapitulated as under :—

Workhouse.	Parish.	Annual Payment.	Total.
		£.	£.
Parish Street	St. Olave	309	
"	St. John	206	515
Tanner Street	Bermondsey	1,050	
" (Offices)	"	60	1,110
Lower Road	Rotherhithe— Workhouse and land occupied therewith	360	
	Infirmary Buildings— Land (about 4 acres) and premises occupied therewith.	345	705
			2,330

Effect of Compensation on Several Parishes.

The effect which these compensations have upon the several parishes is shown by the following table, the total amount of 2,330*l.* being apportioned as a charge upon each parish according to the rateable value which is in force at the time the payments are made, such basis being that upon which the common fund charges of the Union are distributed.

Parish.	Compensation.	Contribution thereto.	Difference to each Parish.	
			In favour.	Against.
	£.	£.	£.	£.
St. John - - - -	206	222	—	16
St. Olave - - - -	309	295	14	—
St. Thomas - - - -	—	45	—	45
Bermondsey - - - -	1,110	1,164	—	54
Rotherhithe - - - -	705	604	101	—
£.	2,330	2,330	115	115

Explanation of Effect of Compensation.

The two parishes of St. Olave and Rotherhithe profit by this arrangement; the former to the extent of 14*l.* only, and the latter of 101*l.* The parish of St. Thomas has a common right with the rest of the Union to a share of the occupation of these properties, towards which it contributes the sum of 45*l.*, but having no financial interest therein it receives no repayment.

The parish of Bermondsey derives 1,050*l.* for the workhouse, and 60*l.* for the parochial offices, making together 1,110*l.*, but it refunds 1,164*l.*, and thus sustains a loss of 54*l.*

All these differences, however, fluctuate more or less as the rateable value of each parish increases or decreases in the total amount thereof.

Purchase of Claremont House.

In February 1885 negotiations were entered into for the acquisition of Claremont House and ground, adjoining the infirmary, for the purpose of extensions hereafter alluded to, and the purchase was completed on the 24th June 1886, the cost of the property being 1,105*l.*, for the payment of which a loan of 1,100*l.* was raised. The admeasurement of the site is little more than half an acre.

First Enlargement of Infirmary.

No additional accommodation by extension of buildings was provided until about three years after the amalgamation in 1869, when the infirmary was enlarged, pursuant to an Order of the Local Government Board, dated the 2nd June 1873, and on the 24th May 1876 the building was opened for the admission of cases, and was capable of accommodating 172 patients.

Schemes for a Reduction of the Number of Establishments.

Subsequently, various schemes have at different times been devised with the object of reducing the number of establishments.

Closing of Parish-street Workhouse proposed.

On the 6th January 1876 the guardians adopted a recommendation of the Building and Estates Committee to close Parish-street Workhouse, but the Local Government Board, by a Letter of the 23rd February 1876, declined to assent thereto until such alterations and additions were made to the Rotherhithe Workhouse, amounting almost to re-construction, as would fit it for the accommodation of from 500 to 600 inmates.

Erection of one Workhouse proposed.

On the 8th March 1876 a special meeting of the Board adopted a proposal to erect one workhouse at Rotherhithe for the entire Union, and to close Parish-street and Tanner-street Workhouses, but the Local Government Board, upon its submission to them, expressed an opinion, by Letter of the 24th May 1876, that the site at Rotherhithe was insufficient in extent for a properly constructed workhouse capable of affording the accommodation which would be required if both of these workhouses were to be closed.

Second Enlargement of Infirmary.

Shortly afterwards this question was revived, and on the 18th January 1877 a special committee was convened for the consideration thereof, when the Board decided to postpone the matter, and recommended a further enlargement of the infirmary. This proposal received the assent of the Local Government Board, and under their Order of the 7th June 1877 the additions were carried out and a certificate issued on the 14th February 1879 extending the accommodation to 388 patients.

Enlargement of Tanner-street Workhouse proposed.

In May 1882 the project of enlarging the Tanner-street Workhouse was conceived, and a sufficient quantity of land adjoining being for sale, a favourable opportunity was afforded for carrying out this object. Plans, with an estimate of the cost (18,000*l.*), were prepared, and approved by the guardians, and the sanction of the Local Government Board obtained thereto, but the scheme was, on the 13th June 1883, negatived, and no further action has since been taken in this direction.

Use of Rotherhithe Workhouse Discontinued.

In the month of June 1884 it was deemed advisable to discontinue the use of the Rotherhithe Workhouse, and all the inmates therein were, on the 29th July 1884, transferred to the Parish-street and Tanner-street Workhouses.

Incorporation of Rotherhithe Workhouse with the Infirmary.

On the 18th September 1884, in compliance with a suggestion of the guardians, the Local Government Board concurred in the desirability of discontinuing the use of this workhouse as a separate establishment, and of amalgamating it with the adjoining infirmary.

Utilization of the Old Rotherhithe Workhouse and Third Enlargement of Infirmary.

On the 11th December 1884 a special committee reported upon the question of using the Rotherhithe Workhouse as a part of the infirmary, and in conference with the medical officer they came to the conclusion that the buildings were not suitable for the treatment of sick cases, and could not be adapted for even temporary accommodation without great expense, and the necessity of a large staff of officers. This project was consequently abandoned, and the committee recommended a further enlargement of the infirmary. The proposal received the assent

assent of the Local Government Board on the 10th January 1885, and a suggestion of the architects led to the purchase of Claremont House. The settlement thereof was much delayed owing to one of the parties having a small interest in the property being abroad, and it was not until Midsummer 1886 that possession was had. On the 4th September 1890 the Local Government Board issued an order authorising the Guardians to make certain alterations and additions to the infirmary, at a cost not exceeding 36,243*l.* The new buildings have since been completed, and were declared open by A. C. Scovell, Esq., the Chairman of the Board, on the 16th December 1891. The Local Government Board have issued a further order, authorising an additional expenditure of 1,600*l.* in connection with the buildings. The buildings were certified by the Local Government Board on the 28th December 1891, to accommodate 640 patients.

Changes in the Certified Accommodation.

The variations of the certified accommodation have been frequent, as shown by the following Table :—

Dates of Certificates.	Workhouses.			Total.	Infirmary.	Total.
	Parish-street.	Tanner-street.	Lower-road.			
29 September 1870 - -	373	543	267	1,183	—	1,183
13 December 1872 - -	373	564	267	1,204	—	1,204 (*a*)
23 November 1875 - -	373	564	267	1,204	172	1,376 (*b*)
14 February 1879 - -	373	564	267	1,204	388	1,592 (*c*)
31 July 1880 - - -	373	564	180	1,117	388	1,505 (*d*)
5 July 1882 - - -	373	599	180	1,152	388	1,540 (*e*)
30 June 1886 - - -	373	465	—	838	388	1,226 (*f*)
5 February 1889 - -	373	395	—	768	388	1,156 (*g*)
24 April 1889 - - -	355	395	—	750	388	1,138 (*h*)
5 December 1891 - -	355	329	—	684	388	1,072 (*i*)
28 December 1891 - -	355	329	—	684	640	1,324 (*j*)

(*a*) Additional sleeping wards arranged to accommodate 21 inmates.
(*b*) Enlargement of infirmary for 172 patients.
(*c*) Further enlargement of infirmary for an additional 216 patients.
(*d*) Accommodation reduced by 87 beds by the merging of the old Rotherhithe Infirmary into the new infirmary, and the revisions of the Rotherhithe Workhouse wards.
(*e*) Accommodation increased by 35 beds by the addition of the Board Room of the parochial offices.
(*f*) Accommodation revised and reduced by 134 beds.
(*g*) Accommodation reduced by 70 beds in consequence of the condemned condition of a portion of Tanner-street Workhouse.
(*h*) Accommodation revised and reduced by 18 beds.
(*i*) Accommodation reduced by 66 beds in consequence of the condemned condition of a portion of Tanner-street Workhouse.
(*j*) Further enlargement of the infirmary by an additional 252 patients.

Population of Union.

The following Statistics have some bearing upon this question :—

	Population of Union.	Certified Accommodation.
1871 - - -	122,938	1,183
1881 - - -	134,632	1,505
1891 - - -	136,456	1,324

Highest Number of Persons Chargeable.

The following Tables show the highest number of persons chargeable to the Union at one time :—

INFIRMARY.

Period.		Highest Number.
Winter.	Date.	
1884–1885 - - - -	21 February 1885 - - -	381
1885–1886 - - - -	27 March 1886 - - - -	369
1886–1887 - - - -	8 January 1887 - - -	381
1887–1888 - - - -	17 March 1888 - - - -	383
1888–1889 - - - -	2 March 1889 - - - -	358
1889–1890 - - - -	1 March 1890 - - - -	425
1890–1891 - - - -	17 January 1891 - - -	421
1891–1892 - - - -	23 January 1892 - - -	581
1892–1893 - - - -	28 January 1893 - - -	633

WORKHOUSE.

Period.		Highest Number.
Winter.	Date.	
1884–1885	6 December 1884	696
1885–1886	23 January 1886	665
1886–1887	28 May 1887	688
1887–1888	31 March 1888	709
1888–1889	26 January 1889	776
1889–1890	15 February 1890	862
1890–1891	24 January 1891	889
1891–1892	30 January 1892	708
1892–1893	14 January 1893	725

Classes of Poor Maintained.

The following Table shows the several classes of poor maintained as specified in the previous Table :—

DATE.	Not Able-bodied.				Able-bodied.				Children.	TOTAL.
	Workhouse, Parish-street.	Workhouse, Tanner-street.	Infirmary.	Workhouse, Rotherhithe.	Workhouse, Parish-street.	Workhouse, Tanner-street.	Infirmary.	Workhouse, Rotherhithe.		
					(a) (b)	(a) (b)	(a) (b)	(a) (b)		
28 May 1887	135	367	168	—	42 6	6 70	0 145	—	67	1,006
31 March 1888	142	386	206	—	36 15	0 73	0 165	—	52	1,075
26 January 1889	270	348	185	—	36 14	0 55	0 154	—	57	1,119
15 February 1890	270	343	217	—	21 20	19 118	0 197	—	74	1,279
24 January 1891	269	350	211	1	21 19	36 103	0 192	0 3	104	1,309
30 January 1892	284	234	291	—	17 21	30 80	0 276	—	55	1,288
14 January 1893	247	210	296	—	24 17	34 100	0 315	—	109	1,352

(a) In health. (b) Temporarily disabled.

Loss from Metropolitan Common Poor Fund and Grant from London County Council.

The following Table shows the number of days' maintenance of adult poor not charged upon the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, consequent upon the number of inmates being above the certified accommodation. It must be remembered that the loss is altogether apart from that occasioned by keeping children in the workhouses and infirmary. To this must be added 4*d.* per day received from the London County Council, and though the number is fixed up to Lady-day, 1893, on a basis of average numbers up to Lady-day, 1888, the loss will be very great during the next five years, as the numbers were largely over the certificate from 1888 up to the present time, in some instances 150 per day.

Half-Year.	Workhouse, Tanner-street.	Workhouse, Parish-street.	Infirmary.
Michaelmas, 1886	100	—	—
Lady-day, 1887	269	—	—
Lady-day, 1888	77	—	—
Lady-day, 1889	1,699	—	—
Michaelmas, 1889	—	443	—
Lady-day, 1890	8,007	1,122	1,812
Michaelmas, 1890	816	239	687
Lady-day, 1891	11,425	1,059	2,285
Michaelmas, 1891	3,577	1,035	2,264
Lady-day, 1892	849	145	2,198
Michaelmas, 1892	30	781	—
	26,849	4,824	9,246
Lady-day, 1893 (up to 28th January 1893)	443	2,785	—
	27,292	7,609	9,246

44,147 days at 9*d.* per day - - - £.1,655.

Repairs to Buildings.

The following table shows the amount expended on repairs to the Workhouses and Infirmary Buildings since 1874:—

Half year ended	Parish Street Workhouse.	Tanner Street Workhouse.	Rotherhithe Workhouse.	Infirmary.	TOTAL.	NOTES.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	
Lady-day, 1874	54	219	51	—		(a) Includes cost of new wall.
Michaelmas, 1874	65	212	26	—		
Lady-day, 1875	86	89	56	—		(b) Ditto - ditto repairs to drainage.
Michaelmas, 1875	35	246	34	—		(c) Ditto - ditto additions to laundry and removal of mortuary.
Lady-day, 1876	32	64	(a) 182	—		
Michaelmas, 1876	7	(b) 410	115	43		(d) Ditto - ditto ambulance shed and mortuary.
Lady-day, 1877	152	(c) 505	62	101		(e) Ditto - ditto repairs to the exterior.
Michaelmas, 1877	61	(c) 748	47	60		
Lady-day, 1878	(d) 228	88	72	20		(f) Ditto - ditto certain engineering works.
Michaelmas, 1878	92	270	65	18		(g) Ditto - ditto certain engineering works and decorative repairs.
Lady-day, 1879	93	172	48	72		
Michaelmas, 1879	200	231	70	48		(h) Ditto extras on cost of original building.
Lady-day, 1880	(e) 307	(f) 433	90	40		(i) Ditto expenditure in excess of amount borrowed for original buildings and iron chimney pipes.
Michaelmas, 1880	123	(f) 730	55	(g) 1,112		
Lady-day, 1881	86	357	53	(h) 1,044		(j) Ditto limewhiting the interior of the infirmary.
Michaelmas, 1881	157	539	81	115		
Lady-day, 1882	159	333	28	(i) 265		(k) Ditto - ditto - ditto - ditto - ditto - and providing assistant medical officer's apartments.
Michaelmas, 1882	51	355	44	(j) 281		
Lady-day, 1883	112	254	69	(k) 707		(l) Ditto part cost of assistant medical officer's apartments.
Michaelmas, 1883	158	253	165	(l) 93		(m) Ditto cost of sanitary works.
Lady day, 1884	282	422	52	(l) 130		
Michaelmas, 1884	89	314	14	71		(n) Ditto - ditto sanitary improvements.
Lady-day, 1885	99	(m) 816	14	174		(o) Ditto - ditto painting infirmary.
Michaelmas, 1885	47	311	—	78		
Lady-day, 1886	40	(n) 1,325	—	(o) 366		(p) Ditto - ditto alterations to cooking apparatus and plans for enlargement.
Michaelmas, 1886	45	(n) 837	—	(p) 900		
Lady-day, 1887	74	(q) 439	—	99		(q) Ditto - ditto gas ovens.
Michaelmas, 1887	(r) 329	269	—	160		(r) Ditto - ditto alterations to lunatic wards.
Lady-day, 1888	(s) 725	(t) 731	—	134		
Michaelmas, 1888	220	150	—	140		(s) Ditto - ditto - ditto - ditto - ditto and drainage.
Lady-day, 1889	(v) 462	77	—	(w) 943		(t) Ditto - ditto repairs to walls, provision of cisterns, sinks, and drainage.
Michaelmas, 1889	103	84	—	114		
Lady-day, 1890	60	(x) 255	—	(x) 445		(v) Ditto - ditto repairs to exterior and interior.
Michaelmas, 1890	47	196	—	245		
Lady-day, 1891	77	99	36	106		(w) Ditto - ditto painting and cleansing works.
Michaelmas, 1891	68	72	—	141		(x) Ditto - ditto drainage works.
Lady-day, 1892	78	96	—	257		
Michaelmas, 1892	61	133	—	156		
	5,164	12,944	1,529	8,678	28,315	
		19,637				

Condition of Tanner Street Workhouse.

The following Reports have been made to the guardians upon the condition of Tanner Street Workhouse: –

To the Chairman and Board of Guardians of St. Olave's Union, Southwark.

Gentlemen, 11, Clement's-lane, Lombard-street, E.C., 15 December 1888.

In accordance with the instructions which I received at my recent interview with your committee, I have carefully considered the question whether the range of buildings forming the western side of the quadrangle of the Union Workhouse, Tanner-street, Bermondsey, is in a sufficiently substantial and stable condition for them to be properly continued in use, and beg to report that the buildings consist of ground, one, two, and three-pair floors, used as dormitories, wards, administrative offices and workshops, the range being divided into two about equal lengths by the staircase giving access to the upper floors. The wall facing the quadrangle leans inward to a considerable extent throughout its whole length, and the opposite wall of the range of buildings which abuts upon the yards of houses in Kinross-street bulges to a somewhat corresponding although not to so great an extent, except at the northern end, where it leans inward instead of bulging.

I have had both the front and back walls plumbed at numerous points, and have also made a very careful detailed inspection of the whole of the interior of the range of buildings in question. I am given to understand that the walls have been in something like their present condition for some years, but my inspection has led me to believe that some subsidence is still taking place, slight cracks appearing at many points since the recent making good of the plastering and painting of the interior of the wards. Taking into consideration the excessive deviation from the upright of the walls, in one case as much as 13 inches in a height of 25 feet, any further settlement, however gradual, must be of very serious consequence.

After carefully considering all the circumstances, I am of opinion that the buildings southward of the staircase referred to are not fit to be retained, and should be, without delay, pulled down, or efficiently secured against further subsidence. I do not think that this portion of the buildings can properly be retained, and the measures which I

think should at once be taken to prevent further subsidence are only suggested as fulfilling a temporary purpose until permanent steps can be taken for their replacement.

With regard to the remainder of the range of buildings in question, I am of opinion that steps should be taken to prevent their further subsidence. I think that by the erection of suitable cross walls this portion of the buildings might be retained in use for an indefinite time, but it is a question for the guardians whether, in view of the necessity for rebuilding the southern half of the buildings, it would be advisable to permanently retain any of them.

I am, &c.
(signed) *T. Barnes-Williams*, F.R.I.B.A.

To the Chairman and Board of Guardians of St. Olave's Union, Southwark.

Gentlemen, 11, Clement's-lane, Lombard-street, E.C., 15 July 1891.

In accordance with the instructions which I have received, I have again carefully surveyed the range of buildings forming the western side of the quadrangle of the union workhouse in Tanner-street, Bermondsey, upon the condition of which I reported to the guardians on the 15th December 1888, and beg to report that, having again plumbed the walls, I find that there has been no material further deviation from the perpendicular in that half of the building which lies southward of the central staircase; but that a considerable further deviation has taken place in that portion which lies northwards of that staircase, and that deviation indicates a "buckling" of the building, and not merely a general bodily subsidence.

I have made a minute inspection of the whole of the interior of the range of buildings, and find that there is evidence of movement throughout, except in the wards of the first fioor, the cracks in which, if any fresh ones have occurred, have been concealed by a quite recent distempering of the walls, whitening of the ceilings, and painting of the reveals of the window openings.

After careful consideration, I adhere to the recommendation contained in my former report, with the addition that I am now of opinion that the northern half of the buildings is as urgently in need of being dealt with as the southern half.

I do not think that any practicable system of internal ties would suffice to render the buildings permanently safe, but this object might possibly be attained by the erection of a sufficient number of cross walls efficiently tied in to the existing external walls. This mode of dealing with the building would, however, I presume, be inadmissible, as involving greatly increased difficulty in supervision, and for other reasons.

In conclusion, I have to state that in my opinion no further delay should take place in dealing with the buildings, either by way of demolition or by taking steps to render them secure.

I am, &c.
(signed) *T. Barnes-Williams*, F.R.I.B.A.

To the Chairman and Members of the Board of Guardians of the St. Olave's Union.

"Tanner Street Workhouse."

Gentlemen, 31, Tooley-street, London Bridge, 16 April 1889.

Acting upon your instructions, I have carefully examined the south-west wing of the Tanner Street Workhouse, with a view to advising as to its condition and the most efficient way of making good the defects, thereby rendering the building fit for occupation.

As you are aware, the inside wall of the building is very much out of the perpendicular, at some points to the extent of 13 inches; the back wall is bad in many places, owing, I have no doubt, to the defective state of the front wall and to the sinking of the floors with same, nearly six inches. I am of opinion that the sole cause of the present unsafe condition of the building has been a subsidence at some time or other in the foundations of the yard wall, owing, it may have been, to defective drains, to the requirements of the trades carried on in the neighbourhood, or to the sinking of wells at no great distance from the site.

Although the building is in a very unsound condition and unfit for use, I am unable to find any signs from which it might be concluded that any further subsidence has recently taken place in the foundations, but cracks in the upper floors and walls have certainly appeared, owing, no doubt, to the vibration in the floors and to the perished and unsound state of the brickwork.

With regard to the best and cheapest means of restoring the building to a fit state for occupation, I, at first, thought that it might be possible either to needle and shore up the upper portion, and rebuild the lower portion of the building, or build internal piers and fix iron compressional beams between same, bonding into the old walls, but after having considered very carefully the cost of shoring and needling in the one case and the risk of cutting into old walls for proper bond in the other, I am strongly of opinion that it would be unwise and most costly to attempt any such measures; the only effectual (although I question whether the most economical) way, therefore, of carrying out your wishes would be to carefully shore up the floors and roof, and to rebuild the internal wall on proper foundations, making good also portions of the exterior and other walls.

Even if these works were carried out the building would at its best be obsolete, both as regards its requirements and sanitary arrangements, not to say anything as to the question of its permanency, and I venture to suggest, after looking into these facts, as to whether it would not be advisable and most economical in the end to rebuild this portion of the building in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Board, and to correspond with the north-east wing of the workhouse.

I am, &c.
(signed) *Arthur H. Newman.*

To the Chairman and Members of the Board of Guardians of the St. Olave's Union.

"Tanner Street Workhouse."

Gentlemen, 31, Tooley-street, London Bridge, 13 October 1891.

In accordance with your instructions I have made a careful examination of the south-west wing of the Tanner Street Workhouse, and beg to report as follows:—Although I am unable to trace any perceptible further subsidence in the buildings since my report to you of 16th April 1889, I find that the defective portions have suffered much from the weather. The walls, as I before pointed out, are in many places dangerous, the bond being broken and the brickwork so cracked about that the building is depending to a large extent upon the cross ties afforded by the floor girders and roof, the building thereby being, I consider, in such an unsafe condition as to need your immediate attention. With a view to advising you as to the best means to be adopted in dealing with the difficulty, I have to refer you to my former report, a copy of which I attach, and I can only say that the more I consider the matter the more I feel confident in advising you that it is impossible to repair such a structure, and that the most economical course is to pull it down.

I am, &c.
(signed) *Arthur H. Newman.*

The result of these surveys has led to reductions by the Local Government Board of the certified accommodation at this workhouse to the extent of 270.

Classification of Inmates.

The question of classification is an important one. Practically none exists other than separation of males from females.

Classification should be somewhat on the following lines :—

Males.—Able-bodied men—Fairly active and capable of work.
Old and infirm men, but not helpless—In two classes according to conduct or habits of cleanliness.
Very infirm and bedridden old men.
Boys should be separated, according to age.
Boys on remand.
Cases not requiring active medical treatment in infirmary.

Females.—Able-bodied women (deserted wives, widows, or women of respectable character).
" " (above 60), fairly active and capable of work.
Old and infirm women, but not helpless (in two classes, as men).
Very infirm and bedridden old women.
Girls should be separated, according to age.
Cases not requiring active medical treatment in infirmary.
Girls on remand.
Children's probationary wards.
Young women with illegitimate children, of known unsatisfactory character.
Nursery for infants.
Women with infants.
Lying-in cases.
Convalescents after confinement.
Married couples.

Young women admitted for the first time, should, as far as possible, pending service, be kept distinct, by being employed in matron's kitchen, and accommodated in separate dormitory.
Mental instructors in the evening affords a means of sub-classification.

Lunatics.—Males and females to be divided respectively into the following classes :—
Cases under observation of medical officer.
Cases certified and awaiting removal to asylums.
Imbeciles fit to remain in workhouse.
Senile dementia cases.

The Parish-street Workhouse is, with the approval of the Local Government Board, set apart for able-bodied women and children, and the Tanner-street Workhouse for able-bodied men ; but the statistics of inmates in both establishments show that other classes of poor of opposite sexes are habitually maintained therein, and that the classification is therefore not strictly adhered to.
The reason, however, for this departure is mainly the necessity for employing pauper assistance ; the women being required for laundry and scrubbing work, and the men for the heavier kinds of labour.
There is also the fact to be considered whether a considerable number of the infirmary inmates should not be in the infirm wards of a workhouse, but as no accommodation exists for them at the workhouses they must be in the infirmary.

Suitable Work for Inmates.

If a new building is erected, the following workshops should be provided to supply the requirements of the workhouse and infirmary only :

Tailors	With a paid tailor, really acting as a labour superintendent ; the whole of the clothing could then be made and repaired in the workhouse, and also for the infirmary.
Shoemakers	With a paid shoemaker ditto.
Carpenter	" " carpenter. The large amount paid for this work would be saved several times.
Painter	" " painter ditto.
Plumbing and Gasfitting	This has been started at the infirmary, but cannot be worked entirely, as the officer has no inmates under him.
Woodchopping	For the requirements of the union.

By adopting the foregoing systems the amounts paid for contract work would be saved, and rational occupation given to the several inmates.

Oakum Picking	To be resorted to as a task for idle and disorderly inmates, or punishment for refractory conduct, the older men being employed in repicking the oakum required for medical or surgical purposes, when not capable of the heavier kind of labour.

Approximate area of land and site of buildings in the possession of the guardians :—

Area of Property.

	A.	R.	P.	A.	R.	P.
Parish-street Workhouse	0	3	35			
Tanner-street Workhouse	1	0	0			
				1	3	35
Infirmary (part of this land is available for workhouse purposes)	5	1	17			
Rotherhithe Workhouse	0	3	3			
Land proposed to be purchased	2	1	5			
	3	0	8			
				8	1	25
Total				10	1	20

Borrowing Powers of Guardians.

It may be here observed that the borrowing powers of the guardians are limited to one-fourth of the total annual rateable value of the union, as ascertained from the several valuation lists in force in the said union. The total annual rateable value coming into force on the 6th April 1893 amounts to 862,081*l.*, and the borrowing powers are consequently restricted to the sum of 215,520*l.* The amount of the outstanding balances of loans is 59,055*l.*, so that it will be seen that the guardians cannot borrow more than 156,465*l.*

Establishments at present in existence, and Concentration of same.

Clerk's offices, relief offices, workhouse, Tanner-street, all separate buildings and entrances	3
Workhouse, Parish-street	1
Dispensary, Bermondsey	1
Relief offices, Rotherhithe	1
Dispensary, Rotherhithe	1
Infirmary	1
Casual wards	1
Total	9

By concentration these establishments might be reduced to two points, as mentioned below, and by so doing it is beyond question that the cost of administration is lessened, the oversight of the buildings added to, and the interests of the poor better served.

Rotherhithe.

Workhouse	1
Infirmary	
Casual wards	
Relief offices (4, 5, 6 districts)	
District dispensary (4, 5 districts)	

Bermondsey.

Board room	1
Clerk's offices	
Relief offices (1, 2, 3 districts)	
District dispensary (1, 2, 3 districts)	
Total	2

Old Premises at Rotherhithe.

The guardians have condemned the bakery at Rotherhithe, and the manner in which their Hackney work is conducted, which will necessitate new buildings being erected for each purpose.

The district dispensary at Rotherhithe is only on a short lease. The out-relief offices at Rotherhithe are generally admitted as unsuitable for the purpose, being part of the old Rotherhithe Workhouse.

Thus it simply means that the guardians are paying 705*l.* per annum rent for a condemned bakehouse and unsuitable accommodation for relief purposes.

New Workhouse Buildings.

To come to the question of new buildings, it is to be considered whether it is advisable to build at Rotherhithe or elsewhere in the country, as has been suggested.

Disadvantages of a Country Workhouse.

The frequent transfer of inmates and large cost thereof.

The impossibility of transferring sick inmates from the country to the infirmary, and therefore the practical duplicating of the infirmary and the medical and nursing staff.

The additional cost of provisions, goods, and materials.

The weekly visits to be paid by the guardians, probably occupying a day.

The impossibility of a number of the friends of the inmates visiting them.

The proposal has been commented upon in a Poor Law journal as follows:—

"The dream of the dreamers of Southwark of having a workhouse in the country, where 'far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,' the poor old folks who have toiled in the battle of life and finished that course, can spend their days in peace, and in the company of their pipe, seems likely to be realised. But what about the relatives of these poor creatures who will be too poor to travel so far to see their friends, and what would be the opinion of the inmates if they were asked to leave the region of their domestic hearth?"

Advantages of Building a Workhouse at Rotherhithe.

Contiguous to the infirmary.

The easy transfer of inmates from one establishment to the other.

Necessity for only one workhouse, as if a country house is built, a workhouse must be provided in the union as a receiving house for all inmates, and the treatment of lying-in cases, lunatics, and children.

The lesser cost of administration, as probably, by the establishment of the workshops already mentioned, some of the work of both institutions can be done inside, and without outside labour.

Part of the land bought for infirmary purposes is vacant, and could, therefore, be utilized for workhouse buildings.

The cost of transit from one establishment to another would be nil.

The oversight of both establishments, together with the relief and dispensary work by the guardians at one and the same time.

A better site could not be desired—the Southwark Park at the back and the Surrey Commercial Docks in the front, both never likely to be built upon.

Size of present Workhouse, and State of Parish Street Workhouse.

Both workhouses are, practically, small houses at any rate for the metropolis, and it is a matter of very grave consideration for the guardians whether both houses should not be vacated, as the cost of administration is doubled under the present dual arrangement.

The alterations recently made at Parish Street Workhouse are of a temporary nature. No padded room exists for lunatics.

Further, the laundry accommodation, lunatic wards, and kitchen at Parish Street Workhouse are altogether inadequate for the present requirements, and if the house is retained extensive additions will have to be made thereto.

Cost of New Workhouse, Dispensary, Relief Offices, and other necessary Buildings.

A calculation of the probable outlay in this matter has been made, and it is believed that the repayment of a loan and interest to be raised to meet the entire expenditure, say 100,000*l.*, will, after deducting certain expenses that will cease when the scheme is in operation, only impose a comparatively small additional annual charge upon the union, and at the end of 30 years, when the loan is paid off, a very large diminution of expenditure will, without doubt, be realised.

Dr.

	£.	£.
£. 100,000 borrowed for 30 years, repaid by equal annual instalments	3,335	
Average yearly interest	1,805	
		5,140

Cr. Annual Saving.

	£.	£.	£.
Rent of Workhouse, Parish Street	515		
" " Tanner Street	1,050		
" " Clerks' offices	60		
" " Dispensary, Rotherhithe	25		
		1,650	
Excessive repairs consequent upon dealing with old buildings		435	
Loss by inadequate in-door accommodation from the Common Poor Fund and London County Council Grant; average four years ended Michaelmas, 1892, say		400	
			2,485
Additional annual cost of new buildings to union			£. 2,655

Cost of Provision and Maintaining one Workhouse.

Estimated cost of erecting and maintaining a new workhouse at Rotherhithe, and abandoning Parish Street and Tanner Street Workhouses.

	£.
Estimated cost of buildings for 1,100 inmates at 80*l.* per bed	88,000

New Workhouse.

	£.	£.
Annual repayment of principal and interest for 30 years at 3½ per cent.	4,520	
Salaries and rations	2,800	
Furniture	500	
Repairs	600	
		8,420
Compensation of officers		400
		8,820

Savings.

	Parish Street Workhouse.	Tanner Street Workhouse.	Total.	
	£.	£.	£.	
Rent	515	1,050	1,565	
Salaries and Rations	540	1,460	2,000	
Furniture	200	450	650	
Repairs	320	715	1,035	
£.	1,575	3,675		5,250
			£.	3,570

Cost of Provision and Maintaining Two Workhouses.

Estimated cost of smaller workhouse at Rotherhithe, retaining Parish Street and abandoning Tanner Street Workhouse.

	£.	£.	£.
Estimated cost of building for 900 inmates at 80*l.* per bed			72,000
New Workhouse.			
Annual repayment of principal and interest for 30 years at 3½ per cent.	3,700		
Salaries and rations	2,360		
Furniture	400		
Repairs	500		
		6,960	
Parish Street Workhouse.			
Rent	515		
Salaries and rations	540		
Furniture	200		
Repairs	320		
		1,575	
Compensation of officers		350	
			8,885
Savings.			
Rent, Tanner Street Workhouse		1,050	
Salaries and rations, ditto		1,460	
Furniture		450	
Repairs		715	
			3,675
		£.	5,210

Cost of Maintaining Workhouses.

Average annual expenditure during the past 10 years in maintaining the in-door establishments:—

	Parish Street Workhouse.		Tanner Street Workhouse.		Total.	
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Salaries	322		817		1,139	
Rations	220		642		862	
		542		1,459		2,001
Furniture		202		452		654
Repairs		318		713		1,031
£.		1,062		2,624		3,686

General Remarks.

Against the increase of expenditure, as shown by the preceding statement, may be placed the result of whatever reduction may be brought about in the number of inmates by the deterrent effects of a more efficient discipline, as well as those economies which may be confidently expected to follow the amalgamation of similar establishments under one management, and the great saving in time and labour now entailed upon the guardians, together with the fact that the aged poor would obtain more consideration than it is possible to give them under existing circumstances, and the infirm and not permanently sick would have the benefit of a resident medical officer, which would be a great boon to them, and is an absolute necessity in an institution where so many are maintained.

Having now submitted considerable information upon the subject of in-door accommodation, I trust that this important matter will receive the careful and deep consideration of the Board, as by the provision of one workhouse and the concentration of the several establishments generally the means will exist of promoting the best interests of the union. Further, it is hoped that the foregoing particulars will aid the Board in forming a sound judgment upon the best method of providing adequate accommodation for the whole of the in-door poor of the union.

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